



THE BROWN

STONE BOY

W. Henry Bishop



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THE
BROWN STONE BOY

AND

OTHER QUEER PEOPLE

BY

WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP

AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE OF A MERCHANT PRINCE," "THE
GOLDEN JUSTICE," "DETMOLD," "CHOY SUSAN,"
"OLD MEXICO AND HER LOST PROVINCES," ETC.

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THE BROWN-STONE BOY.

“A-A-A-H! *he's* no consul-general!” cried the brown-stone boy, with an accent of supreme disgust.

“Oh yes, I think he is; I'm quite sure he is,” I expostulated. “I had occasion to visit the consul at his office, and I am sure this is the same man.”

“Well, what I mean is that he's no *kind* of a consul-general: he's a fossil. What a treasure he'd have been about ten thousand years ago!” cried the brown-stone boy, wagging his head with enthusiasm.

“How so?” I inquired, still puzzled.

“He wouldn't give me a 'distressed-seaman's' certificate. If he had, I could have sailed on this steamer for nothing. That's the kind of a man he is.”

It was the first I had heard of the brown-stone boy's being a distressed seaman,—or a

seaman at all, for that matter. He did not look it in the least.

We had made a long voyage together from the tropics. My companion had generally appeared on deck in pajamas, claiming that this was the only rational costume for such a climate. And on a succession of hot days, when the very wind was hot, and blew the fumes of the smoke-funnels directly back into our faces, his claim was not without a certain amount of reason. Again he would appear in a ragged, greasy old jacket, a bad hat, slouchy carpet slippers, and quite innocent of shirt-collar, which was much less satisfactorily accounted for. His comings on deck were of a mysterious, periodic sort. The long intervals between them we inclined to ascribe to sea-sickness. He had two different manners. At one time he would hang upon the outskirts of the groups, listening with an air of exaggerated reverence to every word let fall. Then again he would exhibit a decidedly hilarious flow of spirits, bestir himself to start the game of shuffle-board, introduce people to each other who were already well acquainted, and engage in loud, warm

controversy with any that would argue with him. His favorite reproach to opponents, as to the consul, was that of fossilism and old-fogyism. To be behind the age, in his view, seemed the fault above all others most deserving of reprobation.

He was, let us say, twenty-four years of age; he had a certain plump, still boyish aspect, and his features in general were good, but coarse as from dissipation. His eyes were heavy, and he had a fixed way of smiling, at times, which seemed half maudlin, and turned out to be really so.

The object of our discussion just now was a pompous little man; who was in the habit of strutting up and down the deck, with his hands behind him, keeping very much to himself.

"Ah, you were a distressed seaman, then? Was it among the Islands you were wrecked?" I inquired. The revelation lent my casual new acquaintance a picturesqueness he had not before possessed.

"No, I never was wrecked. 'Most everything else has happened to me, but I never

was wrecked," he replied. "I wasn't a seaman; I was busted—in business."

"Ah, in business?"

"Yes; but a consul-general needn't look so close, need he? He's got a right to draw off them certificates and pass you home, if he wants to. What's he good for, if he don't do it? He knew all about me—I told him. My family lives in New York,—the old lady's well known. We're way up—high-toned. We've got a four-story, high-stoop house on West Blank Street, close to the Avenue.—I ain't no slouch: I'm a brown-stone boy, I am."

Ah, he was a brown-stone boy; that was it? This description of himself—from the brown-stone houses that form the prosperous and fashionable quarter of New York,—he repeated more than once, and by it, better than his own name, I have ever since remembered him.

"He wouldn't give me a certificate, this old consul wouldn't. *He* ought to have associated with Methuselah.—So I had to play it fine, and stow away on the steamer on my own account."

This was a new light on the case. Though the brown-stone boy was avowedly far from an

exemplary companion, I heard his story with involuntary entertainment. His talk was characterized by a peculiar slang and intonation not found in just that form anywhere but in New York, and there among its reprobate classes. If he were of superior station, he had thoroughly adapted himself to the manners of strata far lower down. It was reprehensible, no doubt, but, after long hearing only foreign tongues, it had a certain racy and almost patriotic flavor. The brown-stone boy had, too, while recounting his misdeeds, a way of interlarding them with profuse apologies, as if these follies and errors of youth were now wholly at an end.

"Well, that's all over, now; that's done for," he would say. "I'm not going back to it, either, you can bet your dear life."

"I walked aboard as bold as brass," he continued, "and said nothing to nobody. Of course I had to give it away to the purser when he came 'round after the tickets, but by that time we were far out to sea. Well, if you had seen that man dance and swear! I thought I had heard *some* swearing before, but—well, all

right ! He grabbed me and called some men, and I thought they were going to fire me overboard at once. Then he called the captain, and the captain he danced. They sent for a lot more, and they all danced. It was a holy circus, you better believe. I told 'em all the yarns I could think of, and talked 'em deaf, dumb, and blind."

"What did you tell them?"

"I said the consul-general had promised me a distressed seaman's certificate, and forgot to give it to me. But what did they do but walk this here fellow right up to me. He was making the voyage, too; without my knowing it. That spoiled the racket, there wasn't much use trying, but I told 'em next I had lost my pocket-book, with my ticket in it. Then I told 'em the parties in whose sugar warehouse I used to work said I could come aboard and have a passage any time I wanted to, because they had an interest in the line. I told 'em I was down sick of a ragin' fever, and had to get away; told 'em who my family was; told 'em I'd see they was paid as soon as I got back to the United States of America. But it was all no use."

"But they did not throw you overboard, it seems?"

"No, nor they didn't put me ashore, neither, though they swore they were goin' to. The captain would have me up every few days, and say, 'It won't do, you know; it won't do. We've got to put you off at the first landin'.' But they didn't do it. I suppose they got satisfied because I belong to one of the first families," he said, complacently. "They gave me a place down by the furnace-room, to sleep,—'cause there wasn't room in the cabin—see?" He laid a finger beside his nose, with a humorous leer. "You don't wonder now I was a little backward sometimes in comin' round where you folks was, do you? I had to pawn all my clothes before comin' aboard."

This was quite a different account of his pajamas from that of a luxurious adaption to circumstances, before advanced. It was but natural, after such a confidence, that he should go on to give me some account of his doings in the Islands, previous to embarkation.

"It was family influence that first took me down there," he said. "My father died when

I was a small kid, and I never saw much of him. But the old lady she had lots of influence, all the same. So when I had to get out of New York,—I had to get away from New York, for certain reasons " (he favored me with one of his fixed smiles, in which it was evident that these reasons were of a disreputable sort) —"the old lady spoke to some friends of hers, for a place down in the Islands, in a sugar warehouse. There wasn't much to do, and I was easy-going and didn't do even that. I used to draw my little hundred dollars a month, and write home to the old lady that I was saving it, and getting to be a regular Vanderbilt. I wasn't, though, all the same. One day the superintendent came along and found me asleep on a convenient pile of coffee-sacks.

" 'Are you down here for your health?' he says, very mad and stiff.

" 'I don't know as I am,' I says. 'What's the matter with *you*?' giving him back a lot of impudence.

"Well, the shipping-book hadn't been attended to for a couple of weeks, and a memorandum of hogsheads he wanted couldn't be

found nowhere. What with that and my back talk, he fired me out entirely. I didn't care, as long as my money lasted ; but the worst of it was after that was gone the old skeesix wouldn't give me back the place, and I had to shift for myself. Jobs ain't very plenty in the Islands, and I couldn't afford to let the old lady know what had happened to me, either. It was a kind of last chance, her sendin' me down there. I'd been into various matters and things before, you see. Nor I couldn't play off the invalid dodge on her any more ; I'd pretty much run through that, too."

My brown-stone friend was apparently so used to being taken for an out-and-out scapegrace, that he would be at no pains to give himself a character and assume a virtue, though he had it not, even under the most favorable opportunities.

It appeared that he had next enlisted, in the Islands, as the sub-agent of a man engaged in introducing American sewing-machines. He had been instructed in running and repairing them, and, having picked up by this time considerable of the Spanish "lingo," had "traveled

around among the good-looking señoras and señoritas," with much entertainment to himself. He had, however, repaired many of the machines in such a way that "a steam engine could not have run them again," and been, in consequence, deprived of his office in disgrace. He had next acted as sub-agent for the sale of illustrated Bibles, sent down from Connecticut.

"They were cram-full of pictures," he said. "The natives had never seen any thing of the kind before, and it was a big scheme. The trouble with 'em was they cost too much. I had to sell 'em for less than half-price, to make my expenses. The boss agent was crazy over it. I finally saw my talents were not appreciated in the Islands, and the only thing for me to do was to get out."

His complacent way of taking me into partnership, in his peculiar iniquities, was not complimentary, but he was impervious to reproof. He received it, at best, only in a very puzzled way.

We were coming into port at this time, and set foot on shore towards evening. Much more

intimate acquaintanceships than this are broken on landing from steamers, and I supposed I had seen the last of the brown-stone boy.

The next day, however, he walked into my hotel, at dinner time, and dragging out his chair, in an easy way, joined me at table. There had been a wonderful change in his appearance. He was very well dressed, and in no respect resembled the slovenly figure he had been during the voyage.

"Yes, all ragged out new," he said, following my involuntary glance of inspection. "Ready-made of course, but I'll have something more lum-tum than this, in a few days. The old lady's come down with the stamps again, see?"

He reached forward comfortably and took the bill of fare from among the bottles of the caster, gave his order to the waiter in a facetious way, and went on with his confidences to me. I soon found that I did not enjoy them exclusively: he was of a naturally expansive disposition, and amiably disposed to share them with whoever would listen.

"I was up to the post-office, and there was the money order all ready waiting for me," he said. "I didn't hardly expect it. Doubtful things are pretty uncertain, and you can't sometimes 'most always tell: but the new scheme has worked like a charm. I didn't ask her for any thing to get away from the Islands. I told her I had fallen in with a party who wanted to take me into partnership in the beef-canning business. I told her it was the biggest thing that had ever happened to me, and I had got the place all by my own unaided exertions, see? He wanted an active young partner, I said, and I was going to learn the business; and then we were to put up a factory, some place where cattle were plenty and cheap. I said I had saved money of my own, and all I wanted was five hundred dollars more, to make the thing complete. I didn't suppose the old lady would do it this time, but, as I tell you, she has come to time like a brick."

"And you mean that there is no beef-canning project?"

"You bet your dear life there is a beef-canning project. That's just what there is—a

beef-canning project. "I'm going to learn the business—see? There's factories here where they carry it on, and I'm going around and look for a place. Yes, sir; you'll see me with my little overalls on pretty soon, chopping up sausage-meat, or boiling down soap-fat, or any thing else they want. I won't kick; it don't make any difference what it is. I'm a *worker*, I am."

"And the partner?" I asked in surprise, half trusting to his emphasis.

He looked at me with a compassionate smile.

"That was only a blind for the old lady," he said; "I had to do it. But now it's over, I've reformed.—A fellow hadn't ought to be spouting his clothes, beating his board-bills and all that, you know," he added philosophically. "I had a good mother; that's what always brings me round all right. A mother's prayers is what you want every time."

There was a dangerous levity in this, and yet a certain air of sincerity, too. The method might have been only his ideal of a manly way of expressing himself.

"I shouldn't wonder if there was any quantity of will-power about me, still," he said. "I had a brother once with a will-power—Lord, what a will-power he did have!"

His platitudes on goodness and the exemplary influence of his mother—whose heart, it could plainly be seen, this young reprobate must often have wrung—were a curious glib parody of sermons we have heard on the ill-fated course of the prodigal. He had not in the least a repentant air, yet he continually gave himself out at great length as one who had at last seen the error of his ways, and chosen the better part.

"I'll give you the whole business straight," he said, treating further of his project. "It's the biggest scheme out. I've had it on the brain for some time. I heard parties talk of it in the Islands. You snake your cattle right up to the factory, and run 'em through the canning machines before they know where they are. The profits come in in having 'em right on the ground where the factory is, instead of 'way off, with big bills to pay, first for transportin' the stock, and then for sendin' away

the stuff. Why, the hides and horns alone 'll more than pay all expenses. I anticipate four hundred per cent. profit the first year. *Anybody* 'll put up money with me, as soon as I've learned the business. I wouldn't wonder if the old lady herself would, as soon as she knew I was actually on the ground. Say! *you'd* make a first-rate partner. I don't mind givin' you an interest," with frank *bon cameraderie*. "It's a big thing, now, I tell you. Let's you and I go into it."

I declined the handsome offer. Engagements prevented me from entering into any other business enterprises at present. It was now Friday, and the brown-stone boy promised to begin his labors on the following Monday morning.

"I shan't give it away at the factory what I'm up to, either," he said. "I'll go in just as a common hand. I'll stay a week, two weeks, or whatever time it takes to learn the whole racket. And you won't hear a squeal out of me, not a squeal nor a kick, no sir," he concluded, in a large, magnanimous way.

I said nothing to dash his sanguine estimate

of the obstacles before him. It so happened that I was detained for a considerable time at the port where we had landed, and saw much more of my brown-stone friend than I had expected. I met him on the Monday when he was to have gone to work, strolling about in a leisurely fashion.

"They gave me the cold bluff up there; that's why I ain't workin'," he explained.

"How was that?"

"I went and applied for a job. They said they didn't want me. Then I tried palaverin'; told 'em what was up, how I only wanted to learn the business, and was willing to work for nothing. They called me too fresh, and asked if I took 'em for flats and thought they was goin' to give away the secrets of the trade."

Still he was not greatly depressed at his rebuff.

"There's two more places," he said. "I'll tackle one to-morrow, and the other the day after. They ain't so big as the first one, but they'll do well enough. All I want is just to learn the business, see?"

The next day he did not go, being occupied,

as he said, in changing his hotel. He had choosen a cheaper one, to save his money, an object that seemed highly commendable. This took, however, a couple of days instead of one. Then occurred a national holiday, and next he was occupied with his tailor. He appeared to feel under some sort of obligation at first to report progress to me, but this was soon abandoned. I heard no more of his attempts to procure employment at the places indicated, further than vague denunciations of their proprietors, and statements that the business was overdone, and wasn't "what it was cracked up to be, any way." I could not judge whether he had tried and failed, or arrived at these conclusions only on independent grounds.

Once, while in the porch of the hotel, we saw a group of rough hobbledehoys teasing an old man, a foreigner and vender of small wares, in the street.

"That was me; that's it; that was my style too! I used to be a holy terror!" cried the brown-stone boy, slapping his thigh with an animated delight at the spectacle. The circumstance was the starting-point of a new train of

reminiscence, which, in time, comprised most of the adventures of his life.

"I used to belong to the old West Blank Street and Tenth Avenue gang," he said. "Did *you* ever belong to that gang?"

"No, I never belonged to that gang," I replied as calmly as possible.

"You've heard tell of it?"

"Yes, I have heard of it."

I had heard at least of similar groups of young ruffians, who infested certain streets, made life a burden to the residents therein, and were the sworn enemies of the police. A graduate of one of them, aged nineteen, was at that very time lying in the Tombs under sentence of death for murder, in connection with a heinous robbery. He proclaimed himself "a tough," and looked with pride upon his exploit, as a sort of method of winning his spurs. The gang waylaid children, if well dressed, or sent with money to pay bills or make purchases, dragged them into lumber-yards and the like, and plundered them. But I had not thought that these were in any degree recruited from respectable and wealthy families,

"Oh, they got no prejudice against family," he responded, cavalierly. "What they want is the feller that can make the liveliest racket ; they don't mind his bringin' up."

"And were there many who were well off?"

It was interesting to hear of such a band from the inside point of view.

"Well, Patsy Bogan's father was a blacksmith, Jimmy Gunnison's drove a truck, and 'Big Ed' White's old man kept a saloon. Big Ed has fought a prize-fight since. Billy Bolton's folks, though, was high-toned, the same as mine,—only more so. Jever hear of Billy's game that got him nipped?"

"No, I don't recollect hearing of it."

"His father was a church deacon,—bang-up respectable. They lived on Thirty-eighth Street, in one of the swellest houses. They got Billy a kind of confidential place in a broker's office down town, after a while, 'cause he wouldn't go to school. One afternoon the broker gave Billy a package of bills, about ten thousand dollars, to put away in the safe. Billy shoved the money into his coat, right there under the broker's nose, slammed up the

safe, walked off, and came down next morning as bold as brass. He was collared, though. They proved it on him, and sent him up to the penitentiary for seven years. He isn't out yet. But he didn't give 'em back the money, and he'll have it to spend when he gets out."

The narrator showed little emotion at this story but amusement, with perhaps a trace of envy.

"Of course *we* didn't go in as heavy as that. That was after he left the gang. We used to generally make it lively for the stores on our beat; snatch fruit, tip over barrels, bother the customers as they passed in and out, and so on. One day I was standing side of old Zumpt's show-case,—Zumpt was a shoemaker, you know,—it was full of boots and shoes, fancy styles and all that. The other youths bounced me into it, smashing the glass all to flinders. Out comes old Zumpt, a-boomin'.

" 'Who done it? who done it?' he says, wild.

" 'I don't know 'em,' I says, playin' the innocent dodge; 'all I know is, I want a ambulance.' He tears up the street after 'em, and I dodges 'round the corner."

“Did the cruelty of destroying the property of a poor, hard-working man, putting him to such expense and trouble, never occur to you?”

“Well, it *was* pretty rough, that’s so. I can see it now, looking back. Besides, I got a cut across the thumb that lasted me a couple of months.”

“Wouldn’t the boys refuse to associate with a companion if they knew he had actually stolen money?”

“Well, no, no, they wouldn’t exactly refuse to associate with him,” he replied judicially. “The fact is, they *had* to get money *some* way. They weren’t provided liberally from home. Their folks, you see, most generally didn’t approve of ’em. Why, I recollect, myself,”—he started off with a new gusto,—“havin’ to sell all the hats and umbrellas on our hall-rack, once, to get funds to go and see Mazeppa, at the old Bowery theatre.”

No doubt I seemed duly impressed with the painful necessity for this measure, for the further details were at once forthcoming.

“There was an old party that went through the street every afternoon. I used to call him

Yowlrigs. That was the way he said 'Any old rags? any old rags?' see? Sometimes it was, 'Eggs bottled!' 'eggs bottled?' instead of 'Rags, bottles!' See? I called Yowlrigs in, one day when the old lady was out, and made the trade. Some of the servants saw him leaving, and they peached. But I lit out on time, you bet. I had it all arranged, so I could sleep in an engine-house, once in a while."

"But you had to go back finally?"

"Yes; but I could always scare the old lady by staying away long enough; that's where I had the inside track. The old lady was pretty soft. My drinking was what riled her at last."

"Ah, drinking? The gang drank too?"

"What the gang didn't do wasn't worth doing. I got as drunk as a boiled owl the day I was fourteen years old. A policeman brought me home on his back at two o'clock in the morning. Whiskey done it; I'd never took anything but beer before that. One of the kids borrowed some money from his father's till, and nothing would do but we must all take

whiskey, and get tight. Then there *was* a circus, and don't you forget it—I got in the way of drinking then, and have kind of kept up ever since. You might have noticed I was full on the steamer now and then.—But that's all over now. It was for something of that kind, the old lady finally fired me. No, I don't know as it was, either. I've forgotten now just exactly what it *was* for," slightly scratching his head.

"She sent you away, then? She could not stand you? I hardly wonder at it."

He showed no offense at unfavorable moments.

"She *had* to do so, you know, she had to do it. I don't say nothing against *her*. She used to come up to my room nights, or early in the morning, in her wrapper, and say prayers over me. She used to tell what big things my father did and how I ought to be worthy of him, and all that. Sometimes I used to promise to make a try, but it never seemed to amount to anything. So there she was, one morning—I wish I could think now exactly what it was for—standing by me like a ghost—

waving hands—handkerchief to eyes—high tragedy business, sec? I'd finally got to go. She asked me how much money I wanted, to take me away where she'd never hear of me again till she could hear something that wasn't a disgrace and shame. I was kind of dazed on account of its being so early in the morning and the racket over night, and I named a sum. I might just as well have had twice as much, but we can't always tell how sharp to be. I took another nap, and when I woke up again, about nine o'clock, there was the money and a note on the pillow beside me. The old lady wasn't goin' to see me any more, but when I went down the steps I bet she was behind the blinds, cryin', all the same."

Alas and alas, for the poor old lady!

"I didn't clear out altogether just then," the scapegrace continued. "Not so green. I waited till I'd spent that money, and then went back after more. 'If you really want to get rid of me,' I said, 'give me five hundred dollars, and I'll go.' She planked it down, and I went."

The frankness of these confessions seemed

incredible. Perhaps he saw that I marveled, for he explained at once :

“ Oh, I don't mind telling you some of this stuff, for if you was to go back to New York and inquire about me you'd hear a dozen times worse. That's one of the advantages of having a bad character. Nobody can do *me* any hurt.—But that's all over now. I had a good mother, see? There was no discount on her. That's what's always brought me 'round all right.”

It was difficult to see in what the brown-stone boy was so much better than formerly, since he told of his misdeeds—many more, and more serious ones, too, than here set down—with the utter flippancy described ; but one could only hopefully take him at his word. He had a plausible, ingratiating way with him. He could flatter by an artful air of respect and deference as to superior wisdom, and he could amuse by many drolleries. He had the social talents, skill at cards and billiards, a knack at music, and the like, with the aid of which his brief successes were accomplished.

He was now very fashionably dressed. He

had evidently not spared money, and his tailor had made a very complete thing of it. One day he proposed to hire an expensive livery-team and take me for a drive in the park. I strenuously opposed this as contrary to his newly devised plans of economy and reform. We compromised by partly walking and then taking an open horse-car. We passed the city hospital, a structure of dingy, yellow brick, on a cold, windy-looking hill. An ambulance was drawn up at the gate, and from it a pale and wasted invalid was being taken out on a stretcher. My brown-stone boy tipped me a wink, as if the joke were decidedly on this poor invalid, and it were a situation no more to be expected for himself than if he belonged to a different order of beings.

The gatekeeper superintending the transfer said to us, as we paused a moment to look on:

"This man was once a big actor. Drink brought him to this."

"Plenty o' lodgin's to let in, still, the old shebang?" the brown-stone boy inquired, facetiously.

"A fine suit up where ye see them open

windys," returned the porter, "or in the cottage beyant," indicating a low edifice in a corner of the yard. "We'll fit ye out when ye'll be needin' them."

"Put me in a private bath, 'lectric bells, and the rest of the modern conveniences, and I'll see you later," said the brown-stone boy.

"That ain't no cottage!" cried an irrepressible gamin now running up; "that's the morgue. Don't I be playin' there every day? And them windys is the room where the doctors grinds up the dead bodies to make medicine of."

The porter made a good-natured pass at the gamin, which the latter evaded by ducking his head. "He's a young foundlin' that's got a job here," said the porter. "He has gab enough for twenty."

"This is a boss place, you bet. I've got a job clearin' the dinner-tables. We have fun stealin' puddin', and everything. Give a feller a dime, will yer?" went on the urchin. "A—w, ye might!"

It was but a slight circumstance, this brief stop at the hospital, but it was to impress itself later on by serious events of which none of

us could have had then the least expectation.

“Actor, was he? I’ve been an actor myself,” said the brown-stone boy, as we moved off. “Wonder if that had anything to do with breakin’ me up? I went away with a theatre company when I left home, the time I was tellin’ you of, and stayed with ’em most a year. It ain’t what it’s cracked up to be; it’s hard lines and poor pay. I was just gettin’ ready to come out in leadin’ parts, when the company failed. I got the old lady to put up for me. I’d been away from home so long that she was ready to, then, and she thought *some* occupation was better than none. I handed over the funds to the manager, and he was going to back me and see me through, and give me a salary of twenty-five dollars a week. I was going to be a juvenile. ‘What is a juvenile?’ Why, for instance, if you was to play Richard, I’d play Richmond; or if you was Hamlet, I’d be Laertes, see?—that’s juvenile.

“But the company busted, and I didn’t do my actin’, nor get my money back either. I

was stranded in a small Iowa town. First we tried a little variety-show; then I got to bein' a waiter in the hotel. I couldn't stand that but a few days, so I got a job canvassing for advertisements for the local paper. Then I traveled with a lightning-rod man. That is what made me so handy with the sewing-machines and Bibles down in the Islands. After a while I raised money enough to get away to a city, and started a kind of paper of my own. It contained the theatre programmes, and was to be filled up with payin' advertising around the margins—Only it wasn't. I fell in with a young lawyer, and we got up a Collection Agency for the Northwest, but we had to keep all we collected for expenses, and the clients wasn't satisfied. We had a Mining and Town-Site Company afterwards in Idaho; but the bottom soon dropped out of that.

"I never used to let it cost me much for travelin' and hotel expenses those times. Railroads and landlords fatten on the hard earnin's of the people, any way, and I generally looked on what I could beat 'em out of as so much clear gain.—But that's all over

now.—I s'pose I'd been away from home about three years before I turned up in New York again. I'd come to understand what the comfort of a home was, by that time, you'd better believe. I swore off drinking and smoking, cut the old gang dead, turned over an entirely new leaf, and was ready to tackle regular business."

"And was your mother pleased to see you?"

"Pleased is no name for it. She was tickled to death," complacently. "The next thing was to consider my future. The old lady was ambitious, and wanted me to do big things. My father, he'd been a kind of a celebrity; he was a lawyer, and may be you've heard of some of his writin's, too? She would like me to follow in his footsteps. I thought it over a few minutes, and then I says, 'I'll go on the lecture platform.'

"'Oh, my dear,' she says, 'I'm afraid you can't.'

"'I'll show you whether I can or not,' I says. 'Lecturin' is different from writin.' You get your little lecture done, and go all

over the country deliverin' it, and rakin' in the money. But when you've written *one* thing, you've just got to go to work and write another. My actin' and travelin' experience 'll come in. You let me go ahead, and I'll be a bigger man than old Grant.'

"So I pitches in. I knew thinkin' wasn't my best hold, and I'd have to piece it out with delivery"; he sawed the air in an explanatory way. "I knew I'd have to take some subject where I could use the Encyclopædia pretty free; and I *did* use it, and don't you forget it. I called the thing 'The Perils of the Sea.' When I got it done, I took it to a New Jersey town, where the population was mostly clam-diggers, I guess. I got the old lady to put up for me to hire a hall, and I delivered it. They went wild over it. They'd never had any show in the place before, I guess, and they wanted me to stay there all the time. I paid the local correspondent to telegraph up a few lines of slush about it to the 'Herald.' When I got back, I takes the notices down to Cooper's Institute, and shows 'em to the lecture-bureau man.

“‘ Here,’ I says, ‘ this is the kind of hairpin I am. Now put me in a page of advertisin’ in that journal of yours, and hustle along your engagements!’ ”

The brown-stone boy always represented himself as talking in this off-hand manner, even upon the most serious subjects and to the gravest of persons; but it is probable that he meant only the sense rather than the actual text of what he said.

“The lecture-bureau man wanted twenty-five dollars for a page in his journal, and I got it from the old lady, and put it up. Engagements didn’t come very lively at first, but the lecture-bureau man says, ‘ Lay low and wait. You’ll be all right. You better pay me twenty-five dollars more for another page, though, and then you’ll be doubly sure.’ ”

He paused a little, to admire in retrospect the shrewdness of the lecture-bureau man.

“In about a month an order *did* come. It was from Cahokia, or Kalamazoo, or some such place, out West. They wanted me for one night only, at thirty dollars a night. The

railroad fare and expenses footed up about a hundred dollars."

He paused again, to scratch his head, and look at me with an air of comic perplexity, then went on :

"I thought the rush had begun, and I was goin' to start out at once, but the bureau man he says, 'You better wait for a few more orders, so's to lay out a rowte, and take 'em in all together.' So I waited another month, but there was nothin' else. The next month another order came—from Arkansas. They wanted 'The Perils of the Sea' at Texarkana one night only. Then orders stopped comin' entirely. The lecture-bureau man says, 'If you don't feel like payin' expenses to fill these engagements, perhaps I'd better arrange to hand them over to somebody else?'

"'I guess you better had,' I says, and with that I quits the lecture platform. The next thing I went into was real estate. I went in an office about three months, till I'd learnt the business up to the nines. Real estate ain't no trick; *anybody* can do it.—The old lady fitted me out handsome in an office of my own,—

Pine Street,—black-walnut furniture,—gold letters on the window. I put a big advertisement in the papers—‘City and country property for sale and to rent. Half a million dollars to loan on approved mortgages,’—and sat back smoking cigarettes, and waiting for customers. I hadn’t a red cent to loan, and not even a shanty to rent. If anybody came in, I was going to shin around among the other agents and get something, and divide commissions. The first quarter nobody came in but a Bowery Dutchman, who wanted to borrow ten thousand dollars on an old rookery that wasn’t worth a thousand; you wouldn’t take it for a gift. The second quarter wasn’t quite so good. Every night, mostly, the old lady used to ask me how much business I’d done that day, and how much I was makin’. When a third quarter’s rent came due, the old lady began to kick. ‘I won’t put up another copper,’ she says. ‘You just sell the furniture, and skip out of it.’”

These, again, could not have been the precise words, but only the gist, of his good mother’s discourse.

“But the way my drug business panned out was even worse. I went into wholesale drugs and dye-stuffs. There was a young feller, that I’d known for some time, who traveled for a house in that line. He told me the customers had all rather buy of him than his firm. ‘If you and me could go in together, and take a store, and I had five hundred dollars for a year’s travelin’ expenses,’ he says, ‘we could make things boom.’ I talked the old lady into it. We set up in Pearl Street this time; no flummery and fancy furniture now, but cob-webs, inky old desks, and big ledgers,—the heavy solid, see? We scattered some empty carboys and indigo and cutch around. Cutch has an awful respectable look. We looked as if we’d been established forty years and were doing a business of a million a year. I was to stay in the office and fill orders, and he was to send ’em on. Well, in two months the year’s travelin’ expenses was used up. Most of the shipments we’d made was returned on our hands, marked, ‘N. G.’—No Good. Some of the mistakes was mine, but most of ’em his. He was on a steady spree the whole time,—I

didn't know he was that kind of a feller,—and I got news at last that he'd been lying drunk somewhere in Vermont for two weeks; and then I closed up the place. 'One by one the roses fade'; it beats all how circumstances used to turn out against me every time."

"You do seem to have had rather bad luck."

"Luck? well!—The next thing I tried was bein' a detective. I'd always had a fancy for that kind of business, and knowin' the ropes about town, and havin' seen as much as I had, I thought I'd make a good one. The old lady did n't like it at all. But she'd begun to get tired of putting up money for me, and this was something that didn't take no capital. I got a place in a detective agency. They set me to shadowing a house where some woman lived whose husband wanted a 'divorce without publicity,' or somethin' that way. My watch was on nights, and most all night too; and it was precious cold and lonesome, I can tell you, hanging around them corners in December. All of a sudden the police on the beat grabbed me and run me in for a suspicious character. There had been burglaries

in the neighborhood, and they thought, from the way I was manœuvring, that I was the one that done 'em. They locked me up, and wouldn't let me go till I had to explain what I was up to. The woman, she got wind of it and went off, and the office bounced me for bein' a double-dashed flat. A detective hadn't ought to give away his racket to the police nor nobody else, no matter what happens to him, see? *Yes*, sir, I was more broke up by that than most anything else I can think of. The newspaper reportin' wasn't so bad, for I never really looked at that as much in my line."

What! a reporter, too? Would the line of his occupations stretch out to the crack of doom?

"I had a relation who owned a newspaper, and he gave me a job as a local reporter. That suited the old lady to a T. She was expectin' me to be a Horace Greeley right away. But if ever there was a dry time for news, that was it. I tore around, with my little note-book ready and my pencil out, but not a thing happened. There wasn't a fire, murder, collision, assault and battery,—not an accident of

any kind. I boned the police and coroners, and I tackled the undertakers, hackmen, and omnibus-drivers. If I saw anybody anywheres lookin' the least excited, I grabbed him, and asked him what was the matter. I went up to the gang again, but even they had quieted down just then, and couldn't give me anything. You might as well have been reporting the New Jerusalem. I shoved one feller down an area-way, myself, to make an item ; but of course it was too expensive to provide subjects that way. After I'd been comin' in to the office, every day for a month or so, without a blessed thing to show for it, my relation, he says, kind o' sarcastic :

“ ‘ I guess you're spoilin' yourself for some other profession, where you'd shine. Newspaper reportin' don't seem to be your best hold. You talk a walk ; we'll spare you.' ”

His record of chronic mishaps and miscarriages did not end even with this. But enough has been given to show the irresponsible view and manner of life of a character of which many another prosperous family as well produces an

example. The poor "old lady" had stood by him through it all, paid in cash the score of his escapades, and paid more dearly yet, no doubt, in sad yearning and disappointment over this graceless son of her heart. She had had her intervals of holding aloof, but even these probably designed more in a salutary spirit for his improvement than out of real sternness. I gathered that he had left the country for his country's good, and had done something that would make it more than inconvenient for him to return to New York. But, again, he said that his mother wished him to return, and marry a pretty and virtuous girl she had picked out for him,

"Bah! I don't want any molly-coddle in mine; that ain't my style. Besides, I'm not on the marry," was his first comment on this prospect.

Recollecting, however, that this was hardly in keeping with his newly assumed character for reform, he amended with,

"I don't know but I will, though; may be I will. I'll see about it."

Questioned further as to the meat-canning

industry, he avoided the subject. But one day he came in with, "Say! I've got to send the old lady a certificate that I'm working in the business that she sent me the money for.—You wouldn't mind signing that, would you?"

"*Are* you actually in the business?"

"Well, no, but I will be next Monday, *sure*. It's only dating a little ahead, you see."

"I don't exactly seem to see it."

"Well, I only mentioned it. I thought perhaps you'd like to send her on your name, on account of your bein' from New York. She'd have more confidence in it too," and he went off, with — for him — a rather disconsolate manner.

Alas and alas, for the poor old lady! There was undoubtedly ample trouble yet in store for her.

From this time, I saw less and less of the brown-stone boy. His appearance when we met was less and less hopeful of permanent reformation. He made new acquaintances of a flashy aspect, strolled with them on the principal thoroughfare, laughing loudly, and played billiards a great deal with them. I saw

him driving a number of them in a handsome vehicle, and, surrounded by them in a box at the theatre, where he seemed the ruling spirit.

He came and borrowed a sum of money of me, under pretext of having left his pocket-book at home, and, on getting it, returned no more. I met him one evening in the streets, stupidly intoxicated, his fine apparel gone, and as shabby as when I had first seen him on ship-board. As I was leaving the place, on the way to the train, I met him again. He was now even more dilapidated, but sober, or at least coherent in his talk.

"*Hel-lo*, pard! You off?" he cried, in hilarious greeting. "Well, be good to yourself! You wouldn't mind droppin' a friend a dollar, as you're goin' away, would you? I've been workin' in a theatre.—Say! I've got the biggest scheme out. I wish you had more time to stop and talk.—Say! Well, so long!"

It was not yet a final leave-taking, however. Contrary to my expectations, I was obliged to return some two months later, and passed, one day, the hospital on the windy hill. The

porter there recognized me, hesitated, and then said, with a certain eagerness,—

“You was with him It would be a char’ty to step up and see him. He’s in a bad way.”

“Who is in a bad way?” I asked.

“The short shmilin’ one, that was chaffin’ me, that day ; don’t ye mind?”

I mounted the stairs with him, and there, in a ward among the pauper sick, lay the brown-stone boy. He was emaciated to the last degree. His eyes were closed when I first paused by his iron cot. They seemed abnormally large, in their hollow sockets, as he feebly opened them.

“*You* come, pard?” he said. “I’m laid up. I got a heavy cold on me. I’ve got to stop these rackets; they won’t do. I’m going to swear off.”

The voice that came from his chest, full of strange rattlings and wheezings, on which he placed one thin hand, was very faint and husky.

“There hasn’t seemed to be nobody here to take much notice of me lately,” he continued, gazing around in a wandering way. “I got ’em to telegraph to the old lady; it must ha’ been

some time ago. It's seven or eight days' journey,—but *once* she'd ha' come if it was a hundred. I guess I've played it on her too often ; she don't believe me. I don't blame her, pard, do you ?”

He turned his face toward the wall.

A sudden flurry and movement made itself felt ; there was a rustle of feminine skirts ; and up to the bedside came a spare, comely old lady, piloted thither by the garrulous urchin from the yard. She was a lady, refined in every lineament ; white-haired, dressed in dark silken attire, and her features crossed by an expression of woful pain. The sight would have moved a heart of stone. “The old lady” had come to her Benjamin, her youngest-born, to him who had been a lovable child in her arms, before all this nightmare of evil years—to him for whom she had had ambitions, for whom she had prayed, suffered, sacrificed herself,—and she found him thus. He looked up, with a gasp, knew her, and acted as if her presence were incredible.

She threw herself upon him passionately,

embraced and kissed him as if he were again her little child.

"I didn't have the will power," he murmured, feebly, "I didn't have the will-power."

"Mother! mother!" he cried again, presently, "if I could *live*? Oh, if I could *live*—"

And with the greatness of this aspiration, that it might yet be possible for him to show her the measure of his gratitude for all her love and forbearance, this spirit, so strangely weak, so lacking the essential grain of fortitude and self-control that might have given him ascendancy over fortune, took its flight.

The brown-stone boy had added to his manifold experiences the last and greatest experience of all.

A LITTLE DINNER.

I REGRET to have to use so unpleasant a description,—and nothing in the world would induce me to do it outside of this confidential circle,—but Juliet Scatterbury—who afterwards became Mrs. Bang—was one of the most superlative of liars. Oh, it was so admitted. You should hear the gentle irony of Sam Lambert's remarks about her! His wife checks him, it is true, as to the particular case here to be described, believing that to have been largely her own fault, but the fact remains that Juliet was an egregious follower of Ananias and Sapphira.

There was wide range and ingenuity in her inventions; no one ever appeared to take a more genuine comfort in mendacity than she. It often seemed as if she would rather employ it than truth, even when the latter would have answered the purpose better. She sometimes wore a rapt and imaginative air as if she thor-

oughly believed in her statements herself. She would romance, for instance, about her early life, tell you of journeys she had made, thrilling adventures she had met with, priceless jewels and wondrous ball-dresses she had worn, and unmeasured social attentions that had been showered upon her. She would make small scruple, if it suited her whim, of claiming she had owned the largest steam yacht in the world, had written, anonymously, the last popular novel, or had sometimes played the parts of Ristori or Bernhardt, appearing under proper disguise. With all this, she was young, pretty, possessed the art of dressing well, and was accomplished in several ways.

Her career in the large Western city of—let us say—Minneapolis was but a brief one. Her family were not in affluent circumstances; they had moved about a good deal,—her father had something to do with contracts. But they were much respected, and as for Juliet she was the associate of the leading people. While there she was not thoroughly found out. There were always some who believed in her, thought her a very sprightly and entertaining

person, and confidently expected her to make a great match. The young men in particular did not credit all the ill they heard of her, but laid a good part of this to the natural jealousy of their sisters and cousins, her rivals. It was probably not till individuals from different quarters of the country began to meet casually and compare notes about her that the full measure of her iniquities came out.

Now, Juliet Scatterbury also confidently counted on making a brilliant match. When she removed to New York, and, in some unaccountable way, made one of quite the opposite sort instead, she was still anxious that an impression to that effect should go out among the denizens of the place she had left. The view, in fact, prevailed there, from some artful hints let fall in a few letters she had sent back, that, though the marriage had been a very quiet one, it was due to a recent death in Mr. Bang's family ; that it covered in reality a good deal of solid magnificence, and that her position in the world was a highly enviable one.

She had, in truth, married a club man, and

the son of a club man, a fellow of good intentions enough, but not at all enterprising and with no very definite means of support. They lived in a small flat, in a respectable neighborhood, where everything was, as it were, something else. Their bedstead, for instance, when off duty, was a mantelpiece; their piano a refrigerator, and the principal arm-chair a coal-box. About the only genuine piece of furniture was an easel, holding some photo-engravings. This gave an air of elegant space, and served no extraneous purpose save to suggest to Mr. Bang his standing pun as to the facility with which it also might have been something else.

This manner of living was Juliet's own doing; she was still brimful of vanity and active social push.

They had some prosperous acquaintances who befriended them; among these, a Mrs. Lambert, a former schoolmate of Juliet's, a friend of her husband, and a person, it would seem, of quite phenomenal good-nature.

"Poor little thing!" said Mrs. Lambert. "And her husband has the makings of such a

good fellow about him, and they have so much to contend with."

Many the quiet dinner, therefore, they had at her house, and many the comfortable drive had Juliet in her carriage.

As to Mrs. Bang's peculiar trait of invention she probably employed it outside of the house, at this time, as briskly as ever, but she did not employ it at home, having found out from Jim, in very emphatic form, soon after their marriage, that he did not approve of it.

One afternoon she rushed in, in a state of much excitement, and said to Jim :

" I have just met the Gradshaws of Minneapolis—a mother and daughter, you know—the most prominent people there. They were at Arnold's, and are staying in town a short time, at the Bolingbroke. I hardly knew how I should get away from them, but I made a great palaver about intending to go and see them immediately, and escaped under cover of the confusion."

" Oh," said Jim, with but a languid interest, looking for a fresh cigar in a Japanese jug on the mantelpiece,

“ I wish we could think of some way of entertaining them without letting them come near us. Our fate is in their hands ; whatever they report, when they go back to Minneapolis, will settle it. I told them we were all upset with house-cleaning. If they should once see how we live—”

“ Well, we haven’t any patent on it, and can’t expect to keep it to ourselves always. I don’t know as there’s any invention of ours they’d want to steal very much, unless it’s the way that piano plays sonatas on the butter and eggs, when you touch the keys.”

“ Jim, you don’t quite understand. I guess you’d want to produce a good impression too, in the place where you used to live, and were brought up. They seem to think I’ve made a—a rich marriage ; that we are great swells, you know, and rolling in luxury.”

“ They’ve got left, haven’t they ? Well, then, I see nothing for it but to pretend to be such swells we couldn’t possibly associate with anybody so much beneath us. We must cut their acquaintance.”

Mrs. Bang repeated this same source of

anxiety to her friend Mrs. Lambert, when she happened to drop in upon the latter the next morning.

"They live a thousand miles away, and will not turn up here again in nobody knows how long," she recited complainingly. "Why can't I think of something to do for them? If I could only give them a little dinner in such a charming house as yours. Why cannot such things be done? Why could not one go to a friend and say, 'Here, just lend me your beautiful house for one evening'? It wouldn't be such a very great tax upon them, and might do such an enormous amount of good to somebody else."

"It can be done," said Mrs. Lambert, whose amiability sometimes ran to quixotic extremes. "You shall have my house for any evening you may select—provided it be within the week, for after that, unfortunately, I expect visitors."

"Beware, I may take you at your word."

"That is just how I mean to be taken," said her hostess, warming with the idea. "It will not incommode us in the least. Mr. Lambert is at the South, and the date of his return is in-

definite, and my parents, whom I had been expecting this week to begin their annual visit to us, have written to say that they have put it off a few days longer. I will go to the opera on that night, and take care not to return too early."

"It is too kind of you. Of course I shall only say that we are in the house of one of our friends for a short time," said Mrs. Bang. "If they happen to think that our own is just as good, and is closed for repairs or something of the sort, why, we can't help that, can we?" To this extent alone Mrs. Lambert became a sharer in the proposed deception.

"Oh, here, no nonsense!" said Jim, when he heard of the plan.

"I will do it," responded Juliet.

She explained it to him, and began with feverish energy to carry out her preparations for it. It was necessary to manœuvre somewhat for the proper date. The best would be that just previous to her intended guests leaving town; otherwise they might turn up again, in some awkward way, at her supposed residence, and then all would be lost. She discovered that they were to go on the 24th, and that

their tickets and sleeping-car berths were already taken, and, accordingly, invited them for the 23d—addressing to them somewhat the following discourse :

“ It has been the greatest grief to me ever since you have been here that we are so upset that we could not receive you at our house ; but, thank heaven, in a day or two everything will be in order, and you positively must dine with us on the 23d. I cannot think of letting you go back without a glimpse of our interior, modest as it is. It will please my dear friends at Minneapolis to know that you have seen it and broken bread with us. And my husband as well as myself will be inconsolable if you will not promise to make us a long visit on your next coming to town.”

By such hospitable insistence she managed to secure the Gradshaws on her own date. They had not intended to go out at all that evening, but rather to reserve themselves for the fatigues of their long journey, which was to begin at a seasonable hour on the following morning.

A cab deposited them before a handsome house in West Thirty-seventh street. All,

both without and within, accorded with what they were prepared to expect of the good fortune of Juliet Scatterbury.

Mrs. Juliet met them in the hall and went upstairs with them herself. The door below being heard to shut again, she left them and hurried down to say a word, by way of warning to Jim. It was characteristic of that rather slow-moving person that he had only at this moment arrived, leaving himself no time to become more familiar with his surroundings.

"Of course you will take care to sustain me in all that I say, Jim," she said. "We may have to make a few harmless little—a—efforts, to carry out our position."

Jim began to grumble, but, at this moment, the guests were heard coming downstairs.

Mrs. Gradshaw had a bustling, assertive way with her, and was evidently a person used to much consideration. Her daughter was of the quieter sort, yet quite ready to echo all her opinions, the more especially in the present case as she wholly agreed with them. The two professed themselves delighted with everything.

"Such comfort, such good taste! We thought we had a good deal, but I begin to see now, we don't half know how to live," explained the elder. "Everything is perfect. You really must excuse me if I stare round a little." She put up her eyeglass, first at one wall of the parlor, then at the other. "You say there is a separate bath-room for each sleeping-apartment? And, then, all this patent ventilation, and hot-air supply, and electrical attachments, and the sliding shutters—it is perfect, perfect."

"There is one thing poor Jim insists upon; I don't know that he is such a particularly selfish individual, but he will have comfort."

Fortunately, at this time, Jim had led Miss Gradshaw to the front window, and they were gazing out of it at the dimly discerned architecture of the neighborhood.

"What does the vapor-bath attachment connect with? It seems so convenient. We must have one too," continued Mrs. Gradshaw.

Juliet was a little flustered. "The—the elevator, I believe," she said, and then launched out into a torrent of words, intended to mystify

her visitor and carry her over this tight place. "And all the furnace-pipes, and electric bells, and range, and burglar alarms, and stationary tubs, and everything, are hydrostatic, pneumatic, interchangeable, and self-acting. We wouldn't be without them for anything."

The rugs, portières, astral lamps, an elaborate piece of statuary, and the pottery, even to a choice collection of old luster-ware, were a subject on which she was much more nearly at home. She drew attention to some of these things of her own accord, and deftly invented the occasions on which they had acquired them. The portraits were a more difficult field. Still, Juliet had thought it quite probable she might have to respond to some comments about them, and—though her answers were left chiefly to the inspiration of the moment—she did not shrink from the ordeal. She had hurried round just before the arrival of the guests, and put away most of the small family photographs, porcelain-types, and the like that bestrew the usual American household, and replaced them from an album full of similar mementos of her own; but the framed pieces

were naturally too heavy to be treated in this summary fashion. She proceeded to account for the large heads of the Clamptons, Mrs. Lambert's father and mother, by saying they were a dear old great aunt and uncle of her own, who had always been extremely devoted to her. They had sent their portraits on their last birthday as a token of their warm regard, —the birthdays of both occurring, by a singular coincidence, on the same date.

Mrs. Gradshaw paused before a painting of Mr. Lambert, in Huntington's best bank-president manner, including a red curtain, a column, a table, and a globe.

"Who is this?" she asks.

"Jim's, that is, Mr. Bang's, father." To have made it any more remote connection she thought would have necessitated too elaborate an accounting for the principal place given it.

"Mr. Bang's father, so young?"

There was in reality but little difference in the ages of the two men. •

"Oh, it was taken a long time ago, you know; and it really is remarkable how young

he does look for his age. It is noticed by everybody."

"And who is this?" She stops now before the likeness of the Lamberts' boy, now absent at boarding-school, painted with an orange and a hoop in either hand.

"Oh, that is only a fancy piece," replies Juliet, nonchalantly.

"Oh, I thought it *must* be a portrait; it's so very like one."

"It's Louis XIV. at the battle of—how execrable my memory is!—Of course I mean before the battle. It's from some old painting. I forget what—but I want you to look at *this*."

She escaped in this way similar inquiry as to the likeness of Lambert's daughter, diverting her guests' attention to a valuable picture of the Munich school that hung near by. She thought good to affect to scorn it.

"I have never had any patience with it," she said. "Did you ever see such sheep and peasants? Jim sat at Leavitt's sale like grim death till he got it. It cost him ten thousand dollars. Perhaps I'm wrong, but I actually cried the night he brought it home."

Jim, coming up, had caught the last words of this, and his eyes opened widely, but a maid, of a veteran air, now appeared at the portière announcing dinner.

"We have had to let our butler go for to-day ; one of his family is sick, and we shall have to try to put up with the girl," whispered Juliet, confidentially, as they went in. "We are so fortunate in our servants ; we have had the same ones, either in Jim's family or mine, almost always. Entertaining as much as I do, even in my quiet way, you can appreciate what an incalculable blessing it is."

There were indications, upon this, in the figure of Jim, who was going in first with Mrs. Gradshaw on his arm, as if he were about to kick backwards in some alarming way, or even to burst.

Nevertheless—for the memory of the prevaricator must be a good one—Mrs. Juliet was soon mistaking repeatedly even her long-tried servant's name.

"Miss Gradshaw is not drinking her wine ; won't you see if you can find some Apollinaris water, Susan?" she said. Again, "The ter-

rapin is a little under-flavored: will you just mention it to the cook, Susan?"

"Jane, ma'am," corrected the woman, in a stolid way, not too respectfully, it must be admitted, but she was secretly resenting the invasion.

At table, in the cozy, rich dining-room, not too large, Juliet romanced about the plates, reconciled discrepancies in the monograms on the silver and linen, and fabricated striking origins for the handsome screen and carved, high-backed chairs. These were a few of the "harmless little efforts" they were to make, to carry out their position. Jim was a person of so little imagination that all this adapting of one's-self in detail to the small intimacies of another's household had never once occurred to him as a necessity of the situation, but he could not now retreat, and he endeavored to distract himself from it for the time being, by opening a little flirtation with Miss Gradshaw, who was comely, and did not show herself wholly averse to something of that sort.

Whenever any thing inconvenient was trenched upon, Mrs. Juliet began to ply Mrs.

Gradshaw with more sweet-breads, or mushrooms, or red-head duck, or the delicacies of dessert. That lady was fond of her dinner, and the policy was generally successful. As to Lucy, she plied her with questions upon the current state of society at Minneapolis, asking her who was married, who were the belles, who was giving parties, who leading the germans, and the like. In spite of all this management, however, there was presently an inquiry that fell like a thunderbolt.

"By the way, who is the portrait over the mantel, in your room?" broke out Mrs. Gradshaw, addressing herself to Jim.

"In my room?" murmured Jim, taken extremely aback.

"Yes, the door of the adjoining one where we were stood ajar, and we really couldn't resist the temptation of peeping in, to see what the retreat of the lord and master was like. Of course it was wholly inexcusable."

"Do try some of the vegetables," hastily interposed Juliet. "Speaking of vegetables, Mrs. Hedges, who has lately returned from San Francisco, was telling me the other day

what a wonderful market they have for vegetables there. Do you know, I want to see San Francisco so much." And so forth, and so forth, and so forth.

But without avail, for though diverted from the subject for the time being, Mrs. Gradshaw kept an air of having something on her mind, and returned to it again.

"Such an unusual face and such an excellent piece of crayon work," she said; "we were both intending to speak to you about it."

It was, in fact, that of Mrs. Lambert herself.

Now, Jim had never been in the chamber thus ascribed to him, and Juliet could not, for the life of her, remember the likeness, nor even whether it was that of a man or a woman. Jim, driven to the necessity of saying something, was about to open his mouth for a reply that would certainly have been their utter ruin, but Juliet snatched the words from him, and manœuvred for time. Could she have got at the key controlling its electric lighting, she would have suddenly extinguished all the gas. As it was, she meditated tipping over her bottle of claret, to escape the topic under

cover of a calamitous crash. There was a long-drawn moment of suspense, when Miss Lucy let fall a further word or two giving, as Juliet thought, a clew to the sex of the person. Upon no more basis than this,—in which she was mistaken,—she launched out intrepidly :

“Oh, yes, that is Colonel Toplift—in citizen’s dress. He is one of the most gentlemanly men and best fellows that ever was. He comes in on my mother’s side,—my mother was a Toplift, you know. Jane, I think there is a draught; just draw the screen a little more. I am sure you must feel it, dear Mrs. Gradshaw; these New York dining-rooms are so draughty, do what you will.”

“Not at all, I assure you. But the one I was speaking of was not a man’s face; it was a woman’s.”

“Yes, such a really charming expression,” echoed the daughter.

“To be sure! How stupid I am! Colonel Toplift was sent to the frame-makers’, for repairs, only a few days ago. I couldn’t think for the moment just which one you meant. It is a Mrs. N—Neufchatel, a cousin of Jim’s.

There 's the most romantic history connected with her life. I wish I had time to tell it to you with all the details. She was a great beauty. The family lived in Portugal. All the men at the foreign legations and consulships and every thing were wildly in love with her. They say whenever she left St. Petersburg to visit this country, it was like a perfect funeral. She and Jim were wrecked, on the same steamer, once, and saved each other's lives. It was near Havana. That was before she married, of course. I suppose I ought to be jealous about leaving her up there for Jim to gaze upon all the time, but, you know, they were always like brother and sister together; and then, if there 's one thing I do abominate, it's having your own portraits all around the house, so one must fill up with something."

Furthermore, on the retirement to the drawing-room, the budget of the Lamberts' small effects which Juliet had meant to put away, but, in reality, had only absently laid down instead, turned up again and fell into the hands of the visitors, necessitating new prodigies of invention. She met them, as she thought, to

a marvel. The greatest absolute awkwardness, if not danger of detection, after so many miraculous escapes, arose from her unfamiliarity with so innocent-seeming a bit of furniture as a coal-scuttle. It was of a new ornamental pattern, which would not give out its contents, when she undertook to throw coal on the fire, without pressing on a certain spring. Again, Jim, in order to give himself an easy air of proprietorship, after remaining by himself to smoke as long as possible in the dining-room, undertook to kindle in the library grate a fire of ostensible logs, which turned out to be only a cunning imitation in cast iron, designed to be illuminated by gas—though this, with a sickly kind of smile, he managed to turn off as only his humor.

However, even these episodes passed safely over, and the evening came to an end without disaster. The Gradshaws made their farewells in the friendliest manner. They may have felt that Juliet, as of old, was a little absent in her replies and not always governed by the strictest accuracy of statement—perhaps they did not thoroughly believe, for instance, the story of the romantic shipwrecked cousin of Jim's, with

its numerous variations of scene between Portugal and St. Petersburg—but what seemed certain was that Juliet had a most comfortable home. She appeared a person of decidedly important and luxurious position in the world, and to that, as we all know, much may be forgiven. As to Jim, he was an honest soul, without an atom of pretense about him.

Hardly had they taken their departure when the Bangs—Juliet first gathering up her photographic mementos—followed them. Jim was exceedingly grouty, declaring he would rather spend an evening in the infernal regions than another such as this. Juliet comforted him, and defended the case on the plea that once in they had to keep it up. But it was all over now, it was a great success, the Gradshaws were immensely pleased, and there was no telling how much good it might do in the future.

A few minutes after they had gone Mrs. Lambert returned from the opera. She found the house quiet and everything pretty much in its usual order. The first object on which she set eyes, after entering her room and tossing

about a few light articles on the dressing-table, was a valuable ring.

At an early hour the next morning she ordered her carriage and drove away. While she was out, it so happened that the elderly Clamptons and Mr. Lambert himself unexpectedly arrived. The former had changed back to an original plan once countermanded, and now calmly proceeded to install themselves. Lambert, like a true business man, hurried out again on some affair, the very moment he was at home, leaving word he would return to lunch.

This being the new situation in the house, about eleven o'clock a hack loaded with traveling-trunks drew up before it in a hasty way, and Mrs. Gradshaw, followed by her daughter, alighted and ascended the steps.

"Is Mrs. Bang at home?"

"She don't live here, ma'am."

"You don't quite understand: I said *Mrs. Bang*," repeated Mrs. Gradshaw blandly. "We dined here last evening, you remember. Will you ask her to step here a moment; it is about something important."

"Those ones went away last night, and Mrs. Lambert is out," returned the maid.

"Went away last night? went away?" catching her breath in amazement at this unforeseen rebuff. "Well, where did they go?"

"They might 'a' went home, ma'am; I couldn't say."

"In goodness' name? you mean to tell me they went home? Where *is* their home, if not here?"

"I disremember, ma'am. You might inquire next door," suggested the servant; "I ain't livin' very long in this block."

"Can it be that we have somehow mistaken the number, Lucy?" Mrs. Gradshaw said, gazing round in an unsettled way at her daughter. "I was so absolutely sure of the place."

"No, mamma, it *is* the right number," replied Lucy. "Here is the same carved oak chest—from the royal palace at Dresden, you know—and the chairs—from the Cologne cathedral." And they proceeded to identify many other objects immediately under their eyes, in the entrance hall.

"Let this stupidity cease instantly," now

exclaimed Mrs. Gradshaw, to the flurried maid. "Go at once and tell your mistress we would like to see her. We must catch a train at Forty-second street, and have but little time to spare."

With that, she pushed on into the drawing-room, as having a perfect right to do so. She heaved a sigh of relief at seeing there the alleged portrait of Mr. Bang's father, the little Louis XIV., and the rest of the well-known objects of the night before. But, as they entered, the maid who had waited at dinner, and who had heard something of the altercation at the door, came up to corroborate the other, and said:

"Mrs. Lambert, the lady's name as lives here, is out, ma'am, and Mr. and Mrs. Bang don't belong to us at all."

"Oh, this is a gross conspiracy, Lucy," cried the matron, flushing red with indignation. "This girl is probably the one who has stolen your ring, and the family being away from home, she has formed a plot with the other to evade us in this brazen way, at least until she has a chance to escape. I think I ought to

have our driver bring a policeman at once. You stay here, Lucy, to see that she does not leave the house."

"Is it me steal a ring, me that was with the Lambert family for twenty years? Oh, my! Oh, my! but the poor girls do have their characters easy took away."

She gave a hysterical gasp and then a scream that hastened the advent of the elderly Clamptons, who were already coming down.

"Thank heaven! the 'dear old great aunt and uncle'!" Mrs. Gradshaw exclaimed, at sight of them; "now we shall see."

But Mrs. Clampton, far from being conciliatory, sailed in with the majesty of a seventy-four-gun ship.

"What is the meaning of this invasion of a peaceful home, this browbeating of our servants," she demanded, full of trepidation, shared by the old gentleman who attended at her side.

"I asked only for Mrs. Bang. I presume you have but lately arrived and do not know the circumstances," said Mrs. Gradshaw, bristling in return. "My daughter unfortunately

lost a valuable ring when we dined here last night. If Mrs. Bang is not at home, will you kindly look on the dressing-table upstairs, where the ring was left? We discovered the loss only as we were starting for our train, and have driven here on our way."

"We know nothing about Mrs. Bang. You have certainly mistaken the address."

"Mistaken the address? and here is Mr. Bang's portrait before our eyes, and there your own, Juliet's great aunt and uncle!"

"Great aunt and uncle? ha, ha!" hysterically; "we are Mrs. Lambert's father and mother. Lester,"—to her husband—"perhaps they are burglars and want to rob the house; you must certainly bring a policeman."

"It is a shameless conspiracy to defraud us of our property, Lucy. Who could have suspected it in such a place? Or else they are all mad. But I will not be done out of it so. I insist upon going upstairs. I know just where the ring was left. And do you see that none of them leave."

She made a bold push to go up the stairs,

but, being a stout woman, and her way being barred by somebody, this was not effective. There was general hysteria among the women. The suspected servant, pale with fright, was almost fainting. Lucy Gradshaw leaned, weeping, against the wall. A policeman had, somehow, actually been brought, and, instigated by the Lambert servants, even went so far as to confront Mrs. Gradshaw in a sort of official way. Mrs. Lambert, now returning, followed almost upon his heels. In the midst of all the confusion, the two visitors recognized her as the heroine of the multifarious adventures of which they had heard; they turned upon each other wild eyes of wonderment, and Mrs. Gradshaw gasped:

“The beautiful cousin from Portugal!”

Next Lambert rushed in, and sustained pleasing Lucy Gradshaw in his arms—by some unconscious mental process selecting her as the most worthy object of sympathy. But he made a vigorous effort, at the same time, to dissipate the misunderstandings that had settled down upon all the group like an obfuscating fog.

“In heaven’s name, what does all this mean?”

he ejaculated. "Anita,"—to his wife—"explain it."

"It means, it means," breathed Mrs. Lambert faintly, "that—that they dined here last night, and—and Juliet must have represented this as her own house. I did not think she would do that. And—and some one left a valuable ring. So I drove right down to their flat, after breakfast, to give it to Juliet. She was not at home,"—addressing the visitors—"and I left it for her with a very particular note. I *thought* it might belong to her guests."

"Pray, where *is* this flat?" demanded Mrs. Gradshaw grimly.

The others were all so occupied in offering her profuse apologies, with which by degrees she allowed herself to be somewhat mollified, that she could not for a while procure the address. Why dwell upon the long conversation and comparison of notes about Juliet Scatterbury that followed? Mrs. Gradshaw persisted in her demand for the address, wrote it down, and departed to find it.

"I will go there myself; we have now lost

our train, and there is plenty of time," she said, with the same ominous grimness.

"The deceitful, deceitful, deceitful little minx!" ejaculated old Mrs. Clampton, "What punishment is bad enough for her?"

Mrs. Lambert made a feeble attempt to say something for her quondam friends, but was easily put down.

"A quarter of an hour with Mrs. Gradshaw will be a very good beginning," responded Lambert, his wonted cheerful flow of spirits quite restored at the prospect. So indeed, it proved. Mrs. Bang had sallied forth that morning, after an earlier breakfast than Mrs. Lambert. After performing various errands, she bethought her that it would be becoming and polite to go and thank the friend who had so kindly loaned her house the night before; the more so as the visit was, more likely than not, to be accompanied by an invitation to stay to lunch. She was in the vicinity of Thirty-fourth Street, going up Madison Avenue, when she saw the carriage containing the Gradshaws, coming down. Not that she would have noticed it, except that they two had their heads out

of the window, their eyes glaringly fixed upon her. They waved her to stop, and drew up close beside the curbstone, where she met them. She suspected some unusual circumstance, of course, from an excited air worn by the inmates, but supposed it would be only some travelers' delay, and, seeing the baggage piled high behind, had no idea of any change of plan that could interfere with the successful consummation of events as they had been left. Mrs. Gradshaw in her eagerness thrust the door ajar. Both women opened their mouths at once, but Juliet, with traditional glibness, got in her effusion first.

"What a delightful surprise! Not off yet? It is such a pleasure to see you again. Now, why will you not postpone your going and come and make us a nice visit? I declare! I am going to tell your coachman to drive around to Thirty-seventh Street at once." And she bobbed her pretty head aside as if about to do so.

Good Mrs. Gradshaw fell back, all but in an apoplectic fit, at this unheard-of attempt to renew the imposition.

"You wicked, disgraceful, brazen girl, get

right into this carriage," she exclaimed, straightening herself again. "Oh, what a cheat and humbug you are! You always were, from a little child. We know all about you; you never lived there; all those people you described were utter fictions. We have been there. It was all owing to the blessed circumstance of Lucy's ring. She left it, and Mrs. Lambert took it round to your—abode, and we are going after it. Produce it instantly, or get into this carriage and drive with us to where it may be found."

She even laid her hand on Juliet's shoulder to enforce her commands.

"I haven't got it," murmured Juliet feebly, overwhelmed by a torrent so violent that it was useless to think of stemming it; she offered no resistance, but entered the carriage with them.

"*This* shall go to Minneapolis; *this* shall be related to your old acquaintances," resumed the Nemesis, with high and mighty sarcasm; "this is what is called keeping up appearances, I suppose—I don't know why I don't expose you to the people in the street."

Juliet essayed some other feeble fabrications—that she and Jim had had a wager; that some

people had different ideas of hospitality from others ; that it was a joke, and she had meant to tell them all about it,—but all was overborne in Mrs. Gradshaw's indignation.

“ *Mamma !* ” expostulated the daughter, from time to time. Her own way would have been much better “ form,”—to treat this person with dignified silence, and simply keep clear of all such entanglements hereafter.

Finally, “ You had a good dinner, at any rate,” declared Juliet, trying open bravado ; but immediately after she broke down, put both hands before her face, begged her accusers not to relate the affair in Minneapolis, and threw herself back among the cushions sobbing.

“ *Mamma !* ” exclaimed Lucy Gradshaw, this time with even greater energy—touched by her tears.

Mrs. Gradshaw was fond of describing the “ tongue-lashing” she gave the reprobate, but they rode the rest of the way in silence.

They mounted the stairs to the flat, and found the “ very particular ” note, with the ring. Mrs. Gradshaw surveyed with a supercilious air all the economic make-shifts in the place,

which, had it had a straightforward mistress, she would have considered a trim and attractive little domicile. Delivering a parting homily in the same severe strain, she withdrew, leaving the culprit in a cowed attitude, overcome with chagrin.

Juliet did not dare tell her husband, but he could not fail to hear of it. This particular offense was condoned, but the circumstance became the starting-point of a final rupture. Juliet Scatterbury went abroad to reside, and Jim—having in the mean time done well in the financial way—as yet sends her money to maintain existence in the Riviera.

JERRY AND CLARINDA.

THE Medfords sat at early breakfast in a tenement-house of the more respectable sort, among the battered old mansions of once fashionable Bleecker Street, New York.

A distinctly unpleasant atmosphere of temper prevailed. Some might have accounted for it by the narrow quarters or the advancing heats of the fervid July day, but there was much more than this under the surface.

"Well, give the boy something to eat, anyway," cried Thomas Medford. "You look as if you hoped every next mouthful he took might choke him."

"Maybe I do," returned the coarse woman, his companion, sullenly. "You know I didn't want him to come here. It ain't the first time you've heard me say so; nor yet it won't be the last."

The head of the household was a large,

strong man of fifty, unkempt, and slouching about in his shirt-sleeves. His wife was a frowzy woman of perhaps thirty-five, over-stout, and with thin, shrewish lips, yet retaining still considerable traces of good looks.

The boy they spoke of, the third member of the group, was neatly dressed, of a certain refined air, and decidedly superior in aspect to either. His expression was chronically uneasy or pained, as if trouble were no stranger to his experience, yet, curious enough, he seemed quite oblivious of the acrimonious discussion being waged in his regard.

"Look at him now," pursued Mrs. Medford, "with no more sense o' what we're talkin' about than if he was the obbylix up to Central Park."

"He's my offspring, and I'll have him well treated, or I'll know the reason why," thundered Tom Medford, pounding the table.

"Then why don't you leave him in the deaf-and-dumb asylum, where he belongs? What did you put him in there for, if you'd got to keep takin' him out?"

"Jerry wants a little pleasure like anybody

else. It's three years before this since he's set foot outside of it. When he kep' writin' all them letters that he was bound to come home for a part of his vacation, what could I do but bring him? And here he is, and I'll stand by him while my name's Tom Medford."

Even in the man's defiance there was a perceptible trace of skulking and surrender. His was a morally indolent and selfish nature, and thoroughly under control of his wife, whom he had married for her good looks. She was then a Mrs. Seemüller, a German bakeress of the neighborhood. She had taken him when the fortunes of the bakery were at a low ebb, because, with the good wages he was earning at his trade as a coppersmith, he promised to be able to support her in greater comfort. She had made him put a number of other children by a former marriage into various half-orphan asylums and what not, and treated poor Jerry with great cruelty on every opportunity that offered, considering her dignity with her choice circle of acquaintance best vindicated by this means. It is safe to say that under the same sensuous influence Medford would have

done, in the long run, whatever else she might demand.

From a small dark bedroom *en suite* with the parlor and the kitchen, in which the repast was being held, now came forth another boy, a son of the ex-bakeress's own, who proved himself a true chip of the old block. He wore the trim uniform of an employé in the District Messenger service, yet this could not overcome his appearance of a hulking, insolent lout.

"Dummy! dummy!" he whispered, to Jerry with malicious satisfaction, as he passed around to his own side of the table, accompanying the words with a torturing pinch and thrust of the elbow.

Medford raised his voice in reprimand. "I had to defend myself, hadn't I?" responded the cub, with an air of injured protest. "He gave me a lick, and I had to return it, hadn't I?"

"My boy's bein' the whole time set upon. I'll take my bonnet and leave the house this minute," screamed the mother, in her shrillest tones.

Medford succumbed, as was his way, before

her violence. He had now, besides, to hurry away to his shop in Centre Street. When he was gone, the pair renewed their persecutions of Jerry, now quite unhampered. The coarse woman, leaning one fat arm heavily on the table, mimicked the motions of his peculiar mode of speech before his very face, and laughed loudly at the excellence of the joke. Her son was an able assistant. Finally they struck the deaf boy, and then, smarting with pain, and bearing a visible mark of the blow on his cheek, he fled from them, and made his way to the place where his father was at work.

Tom Medford was but little pleased to see his unusual offspring enter his shop. Instead of being proud of the boy, who was in many ways superior, he was never any thing more than apologetic for his existence. The eyes of his shop-mates were fixed upon him with curiosity. He summoned one of the more intelligent of them, and said: "Here, talk with him a bit, will you? See what he wants."

"*Me* talk with him? Why don't you do it yourself?"

"The fact is, mate, I don't understand his

lingo; he's learned the devil's own crinklum-crunklums that nobody but themselves knows anything about."

"Then how do you think I know? I never was no dummy."

"Oh, he writes it down; he can write it down for ye fast enough; but the fact is"—confidentially—"the fact is, I don't read much writin', and I wouldn't wonder if a good part o' what he's got to say goes astray at our house."

Thus urged, the other procured a soiled piece of paper, and endeavored to open communication with the youth thus so curiously cut off from intercourse even with the parent who brought him into the world. Even with so good a cause of complaint as he had, Jerry was reticent, however, before a stranger.

"As near as I can make out," summed up the interpreter, "he's been hit a pretty hard crack by some woman, and he don't like it. There's the mark of it on his face, too."

"Yes," assented Medford, "the woman o' the house don't fancy him—that's it, that's it. Well, tell him it's all right, all right," waving an arm soothingly. "I'll look after him at

supper-time. Tell him he can run around town and play till then. Of course he wouldn't want to stay here."

He quite forgot to give the boy any money for lunch, but this soon proved, even to the latter, a matter of slight consequence. He had seen little of the world till now. He had a quick eye and alert movements, and was amply able to take care of himself in the crowded streets. He gazed into the shop windows, at the burly policemen, and up at the tall buildings. Finally a fire-engine tore by, dropping hot coals behind it. When he followed this to its destination, and actually saw the conflagration of a dry-goods house in Worth Street, he was quite beside himself with enthusiasm, and, for the time being, at the end of all his troubles.

He was a boy much like other boys. The public institution where he had been placed for long years past was benevolent, no doubt, but it was far from his ideal of a home. Alas! since the coming of a step-mother there had been for him no home, no trace of that warm personal interest and affection that it is in the

hearts of human beings to desire. His was the very old story of the heartless cruelty that so often arises from this kind of parentage, frequently so desirable in itself. He had felt that unless some change for the better arose in his friendless and desolate situation he must even run away from the school, and seek his fortune in the world. He had persuaded himself that he might have exaggerated the former repulses met with under his father's roof, or that things there, in the long interval, might have taken a favorable turn. Self-invited, he had begun this luckless visit; it had proceeded from bad to worse; its third day was now drawing to a close, and events were approaching their most embittered pass.

At the supper table the scenes of the morning were renewed, and even, if possible, in aggravated form. Medford could give no real protection, and the boy's heart sank within him. Hardly knowing whither to turn, he went alone into the stuffy little parlor, and took up one of a few cheap books lying there. The first two nights of his stay he had gone down into the street, with Mrs. Seemüller's

son, to be amused, but found that this was only to be made a butt of instead by a band of companions as rough and graceless as his conductor.

The virago and her son followed him into the parlor. The latter struck the book from his hand, and the former bristled up over him in a threatening attitude. He threw out his hands in a gesture of self-defence. The messenger-boy ran to the door and summoned Medford, malevolently crying, "He's struck me mother! he's struck me mother!"

"Ah, would you? You strike a woman! That's a little too much," cried the man, seizing the cowering Jerry, and violently belaboring him. His ire had long been fuming at the idea of all this annoyance to which he found himself subjected, and, like many such natures, he now, as the easiest course, turned squarely over to the side of injustice, and vented it upon the poor victim who had already suffered so much.

Jerry escaped from his hands, blinded, stunned, and crying as if his heart would break—though this even less at the injuries he had

received than the final dissipation of all his illusions. He found himself in the brilliantly lighted street. The electric lights, then only lately introduced there, shone vividly into the shop windows and upon the motley groups of foreigners on the sidewalks. This was no place for concealment. Even as he paused a moment to take breath he saw his father coming after him.

"Hi, Jerry! come back now. I'll do ye no more harm," cried the parent. "Come back now, I say."

But the ears of the fugitive were impervious to all human sounds; thinking he was wanted only for further punishment, he sped on, fear adding wings to his feet. He plunged down a side street and through a number of dark alleys, and came out at last at the water's edge.

Medford, discomfited in the pursuit, went back to his home, swore a while, as in duty bound, at the family remaining there, and then settled down in an entirely comfortable state of resignation to his loss, which was not disturbed even when he found that Jerry had not

returned to school, nor was heard of from any quarter.

The great dark hulls and tangled cordage of the shipping rose mysteriously around our fugitive, and the dark waters gave their ominous chuckle at his feet. He could not return to school to-night, even if he would. The pressing question first before him was to secure a night's lodging.

While he was lost in thought, a young man of dandified pattern came by and threw a valise at his feet for him to carry. The action, though not the speech, was plainly intelligible, and Jerry, glad of the opening, shouldered the heavy bag and followed him across one of the ferries, and then a considerable distance up into the town on the other side. He received a quarter of a dollar piece in payment for his service, and with this coin in his hand found himself at ten o'clock at night in an unknown part of Jersey City — all parts of which, for that matter, were equally unknown to him.

He wandered about somewhat aimlessly, and reached the northern suburbs. There he

met an ice wagon, going homeward empty after its belated rounds of the day. A high partition so cut off the rear part of it from the view of the driver—drowsing besides on the seat—that he would not be likely to see what was transacting there. Jerry took advantage of this circumstance to creep within and steal a ride. Lulled by the long-continued, monotonous motion, he at length fell fast asleep.

He was awakened next morning by a number of people—belonging to a farm attached to an ice-cutting establishment—standing over him. They scolded him at first, then manifested much curiosity about his infirmity, and finally gave him a good breakfast and let him go. According to Jerry's own subsequent account, his endeavor to communicate with these acquaintances was not in all respects satisfactory.

“That ice-farmer family,” he wrote, “ask me how was my name, where did I go, and what did I do. I gave them a changed name, because I was not secure if they would send me back to my father. But sometimes they look to both

sides of the paper, and can not know its meaning, and I had discouraged."

Among deaf-mutes there are many who learn to express themselves with perfect facility in ordinary language, but the vast majority never escape from a quaint dialect constructed upon analogy with their language of signs. They use the vernacular like the most unversed of foreigners. Jerry, with all his brightness—bearing in mind, too, that he had by no means finished his schooling—belonged to the latter class, and afforded no exception to their peculiarities.

From this first stopping-place he went on, meeting with various adventures and hardships, till he arrived at a region which must have been somewhere about the Wallkill Valley. There he worked a short time at his trade of cabinet-maker, the elements of which he acquired at the Institution, and thence set out again, this time making in the direction of the Hudson, which he finally reached at Newburgh. He was conveyed across it by a fisherman, took to catching rides on railroad trains, with the idea of getting to Canada, lost

his bearings, and was at length ignominiously put off by a conductor. He found himself at the small station of Staatsburg, much south of the point where, by this time, he had expected to be.

It was there I first saw him, sitting disconsolately on the edge of the depot platform. He had fallen in already with one of our own characters of local celebrity, Barney Pringle, a strong, adult deaf-mute, of little education, employed on the railroad to move turn-tables, now here and now further up the track. He had lost both arms in an accident, but neither this nor any other of his disabilities was allowed to dampen a peculiar flow of spirits. He was a short, thick-set fellow, with a ruddy visage, and very lively ways. He could do a variety of surprising feats, the principal of which was putting on and taking off his hat with the aid of his stumps and teeth.

As I approached the pair seemed to have been conferring together, probably to no great purpose. Jerry arose and handed me a written paper, which I took and read as follows :

“ Do you know a gentlemen who would be

willing to let a deaf boy work how to do farming, without getting any money for several weeks?"

The hint was a modest one, and certainly much more striking than common in its form. Pringle, who stood by, and had evidently acquainted himself with the purport of the communication, waved his stumps in a cheerful way, as if conveying that the plan suggested was one that amply met his approval.

I had learned, years before, something of the method of spelling on the fingers, and now proceeded to revive it, much to Jerry's delight. It so happened that just at this time, a valuable colt on our place had been discovered to be totally deaf. He was Bulbul, son of Bullfinch, by imported Capricorn, first dam Electra, second dam Alcyone, etc., etc., a dark bay beauty with a star on his forehead and black points extending up to the knees. By his birthright he should have been one of the best of his kind, but he was likely, instead, through his unfortunate disability, to be all but wholly worthless.

A singular idea flashed across my mind;

might not some affinity be developed between the boy and the colt? Perhaps some occult sympathy might arise out of their common affliction that would render Jerry a more useful guardian and educator for Bulbul than anybody else.

It was a wild and whimsical conceit, no doubt, yet it determined me to take the boy home. I had come to the station that day to meet a coppersmith who was to arrive from New York to do work on a rather elaborate fountain we were putting up in an oblong fish-pond on a terrace before the house; but he disappointed me. He did not come, in fact, till a week or ten days afterwards. I therefore took Jerry up beside me, and we drove away homeward.

At a transverse road we met another wagon, containing a man and several women, coming directly across our course. All at once Jerry leaped to his feet, leaned out over the dash-board, and began to signal violently to a young girl in the other wagon, who replied to his manifestations in kind. She was a chubby little thing of fourteen or fifteen, with a comely

face, and black hair tied in a twist, falling down her back. My companion seemed to ask me, in an appealing way, to stop, and when I had done so, leaping down, he ran to shake hands with his friend. Their motions, rapid as lightning, were a marvel to see. They were rather like some of the animated races of southern Europe than phlegmatic Anglo-Saxons. It seemed that they were friends or acquaintances from the same school. They met like strangers in a strange land, overjoyed at the unexpected encounter, and the recollection it brought up of the many things in common between them.

"Clarinda's my brother's child," said the man in the other vehicle, very civilly. "He left her to us when he died, and she's the pride of our house. It's a great treat to them dummies," he added, presently, "to see some o' their own sort once in a while. I'd go half a day's journey out o' my way, any time, to give the girl a treat like this."

He was a locomotive engineer, living at Tivoli, and being briefly off duty, had hired a horse and taken his family out for a drive. I

told him how it was I happened to have Jerry with me.

"He's a good boy," said Clarinda, her certificate of character being passed over to me in her own handwriting, on a pad she carried for the purpose. "He can study very well. He can also play well at various many games, as such the baseball, the oar, the athletic, etc."

"You must let him come and see us," urged Clarinda's family; and the girl herself gave him such a parting salute as might some vivacious Spanish señorita.

He returned to me flushed with excitement and pleasure. The only drawback to his contentment for the time being was that his clothes were "too old-fashionable" for such an interview. Thus he described their dusty, travel-stained condition.

Our farm at Staatsburg was an attractive one. There was not much money in such an enterprise, it is true, but it was, though I say it myself, the show-place of the country roundabout. I think Jerry enjoyed its charms to the full. We had from the terrace a view of the distant ranges of the Catskills, blue as a

dream of fairy-land. Back of the house, on a sunny slope, was a vineyard, the terraced vines of which, on their slim poles, always impressed me like rows of dismounted cavaliers on parade. A feature on which we particularly prided ourselves was our white pigeons, a flock of which were continually fluttering above the farm buildings, or sitting along the ridge crests, with a most genial, home-like effect. If by chance any of darker hue appeared among them, it was the great misfortune, if not the fault of these, for the shot-gun was at once got out, and they were picked off, to keep the flock pure white.

A certain part of the farm buildings was at no great remove from the railroad. The track, I regret to say, ran directly through our place, this being its only drawback. And yet perhaps it was not so much of a drawback after all, inasmuch as our young horses, for instance, being daily accustomed to this alarm would not be so easily frightened in after-life.

Before being introduced to the colt, Jerry was familiarized somewhat with the other stock, and set at a variety of small tasks, in all

of which he acquitted himself very well. I asked him about his trade; he said he had not learned it well.

"Our boss," said he, "taught us to make only very common or old-fashioned articles, such as mostly sweeping the floor."

Meantime the coppersmith from New York arrived. He proved to be from the very shop in Center Street where Jerry's father belonged. He was, in fact, the one who had acted as interpreter in the interview described.

"His step-mother battered him round, and he ran away from 'em. I don't blame him," said he, explaining what he knew about Jerry's case.

After this we felt in but little further need of certificates to our new assistant's standing.

A letter came from Clarinda, a little overture, beginning an innocent, quaintly amusing, and original correspondence, which, first and last, extended over a long time. It was addressed to "Esq. J. Medford."

CLARINDA TO JERRY.

"MY FRIEND—That is the first time I wrote

to you for my improving education. I ask what is your doing now? What is your business in? Also I would like to hear of your travels. Will you tell me them? For my own person, I help my aunt, Mrs. Shackley, in house-working. Sometimes I ride with my uncle on his locomotive engine, of which its name is Ajax. My uncle says if you will come to see us here, you can ride with ourselves on Ajax, if you will have a curiosity to do so. When you come here you can find a white color house. You must turn in a eastly direction, about three blocks far, right side down. It opposites the Baptist religion's church, also white color. I am quite better in my writing now, so I close my satisfactorily letter with saying Good Morning. Your Friend,

“CLARINDA SHACKLEY.”

The much-flattered recipient of this epistle replied to it substantially as follows :

JERRY TO CLARINDA.

“MY DEAR FRIEND CLARINDA—My business is I work in a large farm. My employer is a fine-headed and sound man in his heart.

He will give me some dollars each month or week, and will buy my fare on the railroad to go seeing you. I have to arise up at five o'clock in the morning, milking cows or animals and drive them in the woods. Also I give food to a small deaf horse name Bulbul, and have many frolic times with him. He is deaf like us; he could not hear a railroad track. When a dog, Peter, barked at him in his field he can not hear it. Bulbul leaved that dog alone till when Peter went too near his heels and he kicked his leg out backwardly. If I could be a rich farmer I would made much money by selling my fruits, corns, vegetables, poultries, and eggs. I like best country than a city life, because if we do not exercise our muscles they soon become senseless. Many city men who only play in billiard-house, rinks, etc., become weak in their bodies and pale face. I can not say now about my travels because I have not a leisure time, but another time I will tell you them. I hope you will accept my letter. I am glad to have a benevolence for you. So now I have come to an end. Your good friend,

JERRY MEDFORD."

Whether it was but a mere coincidence, or that there was, in fact, an atom of truth in my theory, the colt really seemed to take to his new keeper with a peculiar kindness. Jerry was greatly interested when he heard of his condition, and set out upon his work with an evident zest. Without dwelling here at any length upon the details, it may be said that we first discovered this case of deafness by observing the conduct of the young animal at feeding-time, after the weaning period. If he chanced to be asleep at these times, he did not rouse up like the others. We at first thought it lack of appetite, but his performances at the trough, when his attention was fairly called to it, showed there was no fault on that score. Again, when the rest of the troop of rogues, in response to the call, would come galloping to the top of the slope in the pasture, and cluster there with ears erect, he would mope alone in the background. It might even be said that Bulbul was dumb as well as deaf, for he would stretch out his neck and open his mouth as if to whinny, and did not succeed even in that; there came from his mouth instead only a sort

of half gurgle—amusing or pathetic, according as one chose to look at it.

Jerry bade fair to cure him of many of his eccentricities. He adopted a system of gestures and sudden gyrations to replace the use of the voice, and was soon able to control him, even from a distance, by a certain friendly sorcery, as it were, by signals with a handkerchief, and by waving arms and passes.

He found time withal to give Clarinda an account of his journey into our part of the country, as she had requested.

JERRY TO CLARINDA.

“I ran out of my father’s inhabitation because it had not been in peaceful sociability with me. I had not money enough, but soon a young man of worldly pleasure gave me a quarter to brought his satchel over a Jersey ferry. I did the same. . . . Then I started, staid, and arrived in various many popular [“populous” no doubt intended] town and villages. When the sun did not shine and the weather rained I could not tell which was the east or west direction. Once I made a little house for defense

from the rain, but it was all in vain. I often felt a homesick, and thought if I would better go back. I met many men and boys and asked them the way by my writing, but I considered that they were mostly uneducated. . . .

“When I reached to Newburgh there were many wonderful and relic things there. I would like to describe you them all. The most relic thing in Newburgh is Washington’s head-quarter. I visited that head-quarter many times, both inside and outside. There was a man who was taking many fishes in a long net. I asked him would he be willing to give me a row with him across the river ; he said he would do the same. There was a rough water, the waves dashed themselves and flew up in a foam, and my clothing was wetted to the skin, but I continued to smile pleasantly, because I was crossed over for nothing, and viewed many fine sceneries on either shores of the Hudson River. Now I tell you another thing, the last. I took much pains in walking on the track, and contrived how I could go to Canada to get work. I asked a man how I could get a ride, in the freight cars, to anywhere. He pointed

the truck, under the car, for me to go there, but I informed him I would accidentally be killed if I went there. When he saw I was very wet, and had no breakfast, dinner, and supper, he let me go in the caboose with him and dry on the side of a stove. Also he gave me some food, and was told I could eat as much as I choose. I spent not less than some time and had a very pleasant vacation with that man, and on parting gave him many thanks in return of his kindness, which he accepted.

“The next time, I went in a passenger car, till what the conductor would say when I had no money to buy my fare. I did not care if it would go as far as California or not, but unluckily it came in a wrong direction. But I had troubled about it, and asked a passenger what would the conductor do. That passenger said he might bring some detectives to collar me to the station-house, but luckily he only put me off at a small town. Then I was sad, and my head hung down loosely. I do not say any more of it now, because I think by this time you are too busy. So I remain,

“Your sincerely friend, J. MEDFORD.”

He went to visit Clarinda, and the visit appears to have been a social success. One striking feature of it was a jaunt he took in her company, on her uncle's locomotive, on the Ajax. He wrote for me, when he came back, an enthusiastic account of it, from which I extract some sentences.

"The iron horse stood in his stable till Mr. Pringle moved the turn-table for his coming out on his own track. I was afraid to climb in on the leviathan Ajax, but Clarinda was not afraid. Some people made fun of ourselves by making signs at us. Mr. Shackley rolled up his coat on the sleeves. At first Ajax was lazy, and the large wheel turned slowly, but soon it turned fastly, and he seemed to ate up the railroad ground. Long smoke went off backwardly, and loud whistles blew, but alas! I could not hear them, but I could feel some of them. We back down many freight cars, and went once in a tunnel where no light larger than a needle's head could be seen."

He was installed, as his abode, in the gardener's house, but spent many evenings with

us. His manners, through the influence no doubt of polished instructors, were perfectly good. We came to look upon him not as one hampered by an infirmity, but as a very original sort of little 'foreigner. We remarked him, when engrossed in some piece of study, unconsciously rendering the sense of it to himself with rapidly twinkling fingers, just as hearing children con over their lessons on their lips. He had been educated, too, partly by the method of visible speech, so mysterious to the unaccustomed outsider, and if we formed our words with distinctness, could often read them as we spoke.

We were interested in all this, in some novel games he had, and in the opinions on all sorts of subjects he had formed from the point of view of his peculiar isolation. Spelling on our fingers, and talking by signs, came to possess for us a sort of fascination. It was the rage. If we had any visitor with pretty hands, she was always particularly anxious to take part in it, for the purpose of showing them.

On one occasion we had Clarinda over to dine, with Jerry, and were much entertained to

see them together once more. Her uncle brought her down on his locomotive—as from this time on he did occasionally—and having some business further along the line, left her with us till his return.

Jerry had considerable knack in mechanical contrivances, and made her a rustic chair.

“My employer says I have some very fine faculty for it,” he announced, complacently.

Clarinda acknowledged his present in these terms:

CLARINDA TO JERRY.

“I sit in the rustic chair you had made me, and show to all my hearing friends. Each one say he or she had never seen such a beautifully chair, and he or she would like to have that chair. A another my friend said she pointed once her father a rusticked one like that in a showed-case window, but he could not be able to afford the expenses of it.”

Jerry desired to know if it were not true that many great men had passed through the world without a knowledge of arithmetic—in which, as may be inferred from this, he was

not at first remarkably proficient. Yet, again, with a blush, he inquired if I thought he also could become a learned philosopher and celebrity by abstaining from animal food for one year, as he had heard was done by Benjamin Franklin.

I urged Jerry to return to school when the time arrived, dwelling upon the advantages of a superior education; but he said he was happy in his present situation, and he was set upon earning wages, and getting on in the world as fast as possible. I wrote to his father, and once, when in town in his vicinity, even called upon him. The interview, on the Medford side, was conducted chiefly by the ex-bakeress. Disbelieving or affecting to disbelieve that the boy could have found friends of any consideration, she said: "A good riddance to bad rubbish! If there's them that wants him, let 'em keep him, say I."

Her worthy spouse stood by, participating now and then by a monosyllable and a subdued insolent grin.

Clarinda had gone back to school, and the two still corresponded, at intervals treating

of such topics as the books they had read, the studies and other occupations they were engaged in. These effusions inclined strongly to be didactic.

"I have read a Longfellow," wrote Jerry; "he is a grand poet, he poets well. Also I have read one called 'Peck, the Life of a Bad Boy,' which contains many good, laughable histories."

He wrote, too, about field sports, which always had a strong interest for him. "I excite much at present," he said, for instance, "about the champion game of the New Yorks and Chicagos. I hope the New Yorks can win. I would be willing myself to play the base ball many times if the players do not quarrel so much to each other."

"The brain exercises," returned Clarinda, "in committing wisdom to memory. Arithmetic is that which avoids us from being cheated in money and other valuable mathematical articles. In history is told us much about ancient buildings, animals, huts, human beings, presidents, statesmen, and other many things. Our earth is round alike a ball; it is

the centre of a polar system, which strongly attracts our earth around its heat."

The girl returned home to spend her vacations, and Jerry went to see her on these occasions. In the autumn they found some opportunity to wade among the rich-stained leaves that fall so profusely along our pleasant road-sides, and to gather nuts; and in the winter not infrequently they joined the other young people of the neighborhood in coasting down the long hills.

A considerable period now elapses, during most of which I was absent from Staatsburg, and saw little in person of what was transacting there. Jerry grew to be a mature young man, tall and strong, and a figure of no little consequence in the place. He worked a piece of land on shares, took prizes at the county fair for fruit, Queen of the Valley potatoes, and colts of his own raising, and had put money in the savings bank. Clarinda, too, had become a woman grown, and leaving school, as so many young women will, even before her education was complete, settled down as a permanent assistant to the

family in which she was so kindly harbored. Examples from the epistles of the two friends, during this time, might be multiplied here at great length, but let us now pass till we find them assuming a new and much more surprising tone. .

A ball and reunion of deaf-mutes was held at Tivoli to honor the birthday of some celebrity in the annals of deaf-mute education. A considerable company of mutes gathered from the country round about, or came up from the city to take part in this occasion, and to have the opportunity at the same time of enjoying the autumn scenery of the Hudson. It was shortly after my return to the farm, and I was privileged to have a brief glimpse of the proceedings.

There seemed something mysterious and almost alarming in the view of so large a hall full of people going through all the forms of animated gayety in scarcely broken silence. A parallel assemblage of hearing persons would have rent the air with their laughter and chatter. The dancing—and there was a great deal of it—was excellently done, considering all the

circumstances. The drum held a position of distinguished prominence in the orchestra, its vibration being felt, I gathered, and giving the rhythm and a point of departure to the dancers.

There was no lack of genuine enjoyment. A very democratic spirit appeared to prevail. The jovial Pringle, who moved turn-tables, was there, and amused the company with prodigious caperings and flourishes of his stumps. Jerry, as one of the floor managers, was resplendent with a large rosette of blue and silver. He had obtained the cherished privilege of acting as the escort of Clarinda.

"After the middle of the dancing was over," said he, in describing the affair, later on, "we formed in two by two, and marched ourselves to the supper place. Stew oysters, crackers, and richly cakes were served on us on long length tables. There were only not more than about fifty couples, and we laughed and chatted merrily at each other. Clarinda was the belle of them."

He even attempted, ambitiously, to describe her toilet. There is every reason to believe

that the great approaches towards a tender understanding between the pair were made at this ball, for, shortly after, the following letters of proposal and acceptance were exchanged.

JERRY TO CLARINDA.

“MY DEAR FRIEND CLARINDA.—Perhaps you might miss me after our lately pleasant companionship together. I shall not soon forget how pleasantly I enjoyed myself in your company. Now I will say another important thing, which is about love and matrimony. Since greatly a long time I am thinking very much about you all day, also in night-time. When a young man become about nineteen to thirty years of age, he can not always foretell that he would be a single man. He thinks he would like a wife and a general house-keeping. Well, it is what I feel about you, my dear friend.

“Since I knew you, I hold many long conversation with you, and see you in many place. I find you to be a good, honest, and beautiful young lady, very good to do general housework, so I ask you if you can be willing to marry me,

I truthfully hope your favorable answer would be, 'Yes.' I can give you a valuable gold ring for engagement ring. We can engage ourselves for some months or years, till when I should have money enough to support for two or more persons. Then we will wed ourselves warmly in either a public or private marriage. The pastor will speak to us about marriage while we standing opposite to him. Then the male put the finger of the female into a wedding ring, and the relatives or friends disband to their respective homes. Then we can take our marriage trip to anywhere. Perhaps I will purchase some U. S. farming lands for nothing in Dakota, and we can have a large farm and a beautiful residence in a country. Hoping you will say a heartfully 'Yes,' I continue your always loving true lover,

"J. MEDFORD."

CLARINDA TO JERRY.

"MY SINCERELY FRIEND JERRY,—I confess I can not say much of love and matrimony, because I do not know much of love and matrimony, and the gentleman must be more

skilful to speak of those events than the lady, but I will try to tell you of them by writing. I was much interest and feel a benevolence to you for a long time. In school, I noticed first you was often bowing to me very politely with a hat. Another time in Staatsburg I meet you again, and we were often corresponding many letters. I ask many questions to your conduct, and find you to be a working-hard, industrial, kind young man, well reputated in your good name. So that makes a gentleman and lady court and soon fall in love to each other. We did not often quarrelling; it is understood that if they are often quarrelling they do not fall in love. When a gentleman meet a lady he mostly begin to woo her by helping her from being badly hurt by some one, or saving her from drowning. We have not done the same because those had not happened to us, but we often talk a short time and take a walk for pleasure, and you company to me at my house or to travel. A lady can not be wedded without the consents of her parents and guardians, who first consent the gentleman to visit her. So, you can ask my uncle Mr.

Shackley when will he have a wedding. For my own person I can say I am gladly willing to love you affectionately and marry you for my husband.

“Your always true-devoted and now engaged friend,

“CLARINDA SHACKLEY.”

The engineer did not wish to lose this niece, who was both so well-appreciated and serviceable a feature in his household, but being a man of excellent heart, and having no valid objection to offer, he gracefully submitted to a contingency likely to overtake all guardians in similar circumstances. For our own part we had no thought of withholding our approval. We were not alarmists on the subject of deaf-mutes marrying among themselves. We only urged that they should not be in haste; they were both young, and could afford to wait, and happiness was more likely to be insured when they were amply prepared for the step. Our advice fell in, on the whole, with their own views, and they rested contented enough for a while in the state of engaged lovers.

When things had been in this pleasant condition for some little time, Jerry was seen one day while crossing the track to hold a brief parley with a ragged tramp. Then, like Crusoe's man Friday meeting his father among the captive war party of cannibals, he fell upon his neck. The tramp, in fact, was Tom Medford. It appeared that he had been thrown out of work in consequence of taking part in an unsuccessful strike, and never recovered his place. A liking for idleness had grown with this ample taste of it, and he had taken to drink. At last, after many vicissitudes, he had to go upon the road as a vagrant. It is more likely that his meeting with his son was a pure accident than that he had accurate knowledge of his whereabouts, or the supreme impudence to hunt him up.

The ex-bakeress, it further appeared, had abandoned him at the first touch of calamity. Her hopeful son had been imprisoned for some enterprising feat of thievery perpetrated under cover of his duties as a messenger boy.

I would have advised Jerry to have little or nothing to do, now, with this graceless parent

who had treated him so ill, but no one could have failed to admire, and even be touched by the charming warmth of heart and ideal of filial duty, apparently still surviving, that led him to desire to confer substantial benefits upon him, even after all that had happened. He asked me, with diffident appeal, to find him at least temporary employment, and I had reason to know that he took him to his own lodgings, and clothed him from his own wardrobe.

For a while Tom Medford went about in a state of deeply-abashed humility, but by degrees began to recover his confidence, and give himself airs of importance. He let fall, among the other hands, furtive disdainful remarks on the infirmity of Jerry. He began to drink again. Of this it is not probable that Jerry, who always remained very innocent on that score, was aware. When the fact of the engagement finally entered into Tom Medford's consciousness, he was extremely disagreeable about it. He forbade it, in fact, and declared that he would never receive another member into his family with such a drawback.

Poor Jerry came to me in alarm and asked what he should do about it. Do? I was for turning the vapping reprobate off the place at once; I bade him not pay the slightest attention to it.

The deaf-mute Pringle stopped one morning to leave word that Clarinda was coming down on the Ajax to pass part of the day at the farm, while her uncle was switching cars below. Pringle too had wanted to marry Clarinda, but, finding she was otherwise disposed of, and about to do much better in the world, had accepted the situation with perfect acquiescence. There never was reason for Jerry's flying into a passion, as he was at first disposed to do on hearing of the presumption of this ridiculous fellow. On the contrary, Pringle was ready to run on his errands and do him any service whatever, in regard to Clarinda as in other directions.

Hardly had Pringle gone that day, when Jerry came to me, in great anguish of mind. He drew me gently by the arm past the dairy buildings to a tool-house for the storage of the lighter farm implements.

"Look within, through the hinges at the door's side," he spelled out.

I followed his injunction, and there saw his father, squalid, heavy, and inert, lying prone on some straw spread out for him. Accompanying Pringle a little way back he had found Medford wandering on the place, in a state of besotted intoxication, and brought him thither for safe-keeping. It was his first discovery of the truth, and he was overwhelmed by it.

The hour was at hand when Clarinda was to arrive, and the distant smoke of the Ajax could already be seen, approaching around the long bend that debouched at our boundaries. Jerry, with a very sad face, moved toward the usual place—a part of the bank less steep than the rest, near the southern line of the estate—where she usually landed.

All at once the colt Bulbul—now, it should be explained, fully three years old, unusually large and powerful for his age, was seen to stay upon the railroad track at some distance away. Great pains were taken ordinarily to keep him away from all that part of the estate. By some mysterious means he had broken his trammels

and passed the barriers ; a long rope halter with which he had been tied still trailed behind him.

Jerry was startled at the dangerous situation of the animal, and, in vivid alarm, signalled to him in his customary way, but in vain. Then, dismissing for the moment all other thoughts from his mind, he ran down to try and save him.

He caught the end of the halter, but the stalwart beast, his head, as it chanced, averted from the peril, and mistakenly playful or contumacious in the extreme, resisted, and even drew his would-be rescuer upon the track after him. A conflict now ensued between horse and man like that of another Alexander with Bucephalus. The Ajax hove in sight, and gave a succession of such piercing whistles as might have waked the very dead. All of us who were in the vicinity ran out, and looked with horror at the scene. The white pigeons on the roof, as though even they felt something ominous in the air, darted and careened about like autumn leaves blown in the gale.

The whole action took less time than it does to tell. Riveted though my attention was, I

was vaguely conscious that the drunken elder Medford had broken out of his place of concealment, and was approaching the immediate scene by a series of staggering lurches.

A sudden turn of his head discovered to Bulbul himself the approaching locomotive. Its thunder already shook the ground. Crazed and half-paralyzed with terror then, he leaped, plunged, and bolted furiously, yet without moving sensibly from the same spot, which seemed to hold him to it as by some fatal spell.

In his plunging the stout rope became entangled about Jerry. He was like one of the sons of Niobe in the coils of the serpent. He could no longer have saved even himself. Were we then to see our poor Jerry perish by such a fate—almost a typical one for deaf mutes—before our very eyes? Alas! it seemed as if that swift-rushing monster could not be avoided.

Shackley leaned out in horror from one side of his engine cab. Clarinda, holding by a guard-rail, fluttered yet farther out from the other side. She was like some supremely anxious brooding bird, or one of those goddesses of

the Homeric poem who would have snatched up her hero and saved him from harm, in defiance of all natural laws. The Ajax had made every effort to slacken its momentum, but with only slight avail. It must needs happen that the throttle-valve, at this time of all others, would not do its work.

But at the last moment, when the jaws of destruction were opened, a new element mingled with the action. It was extraordinary, ludicrous, contemptible, but efficient. Besotted Thomas Medford stood beside the track, glowering, leering, uttering incoherent words as of interest or encouragement to the contest. Whether it was only pure, mad delight in strife, such as actuates the typical Irishman at Donnybrook Fair, or a sudden vertigo by which he was taken, or a partial sobering, a disgust with life, and vague repentance and purpose of reparation even at this late hour—all at once, throwing out both arms before him, with the fists stoutly doubled, he leaped headlong into the fray, impinging violently against Jerry and the colt.

Whirling wreaths of steam, lashing coils of

rope, vague forms in turmoil, and the white pigeons circling above it all like gulls in a storm.

Then the Ajax passed on. Our Jerry was found beside the track, bruised, half stunned, but practically unharmed. Tom Medford was crushed beyond recovery. The benighted colt too had tried conclusions with the mechanical force with fatal effect. Thus, though his eccentricities had been pretty well studied already, opportunity was never afforded of seeing what such an exceptional animal would have become under the full-fledged responsibilities of life.

Jerry threw himself upon his father's body in a touching way, and Clarinda joined sweetly in his grief. It had always been one of the things to note that the boy—perhaps through sense of shame—had said so little about his family difficulties. He would now have liked to represent that this father had had no faults, and as to their apparent estrangement and his living away from home, it had been a plan commending itself to the judgment of both.

May I say, by way of a word in conclusion,

that Jerry and Clarinda took up a quarter section of government land in Montana. They rose to a position of admitted prominence there. Jerry—and properly enough too, having the best handwriting and best average education of any one in the place—was made postmaster. He might have counted upon retaining this office indefinitely, but for charges of “offensive partisanship” laid at his door. This was unfortunate, if true, but it has the redeeming feature that a good deal of vigor of mind must have been the cause of it.

But perhaps the most interesting bit of intelligence that has come to us about them is that their first child is a hearing and speaking baby, just like any other. We often please ourselves with picturing some of the experiences likely to befall an infant to be brought up under such exceptional circumstances.

A LUNCH AT MCARTHUR'S.

THE MCARTHURS were temporarily without a servant. The last one had said she could not dress on the wages they paid. The one just before that had mixed up the roast beef and fish on the same platter, and when discharged had departed with a scornful fling at the illiteracy of Mrs. McArthur, because, forsooth, that ambitious young matron was taking a course of German lessons.

“ It’s always studyin’ ye are,” said she, “and a mighty sthupid head ye musht have, intirely. Sure, I complayted me eddicashin before I was tin.”

But these were only occasional incidents ; the standard complaint was that they lived in a flat. The contemporary American flat has, like certain electricity, induced a current in the opposite direction : it has given rise to a class

of servants who are known by their aversion to it. It has no area railings to hang over, and gives no opportunity to entertain chance admirers, or for delightful converse with the domestics of neighboring families; their society is reduced to a matter of formal visiting; and how can a girl provision her family from kitchens so easily under observation?

When it is added to all this that the McArthurs' flat was small, and situated in the rather remote district of Washington Heights, to which McArthur was consigned by his employment as a civil engineer on the new aqueduct, it will readily be seen how Mrs. McArthur might have become her own servitor.

"My friends, the Vandersilts and Castors, have the same sort of trouble," said McArthur one day, in a jocose mood,—though as a rule he was much more inclined to grumble.

"Do you mean that *they* have taken to living in flats?"

"No, but I mean even they don't escape the common annoyance. Look at the Van Red Hooks there, who keep from fifteen to twenty pampered menials. Lately, when the butler col-

lided with a man with a basket of glass, in the hall, they couldn't find anybody whose business it was to sweep up the fragments."

"Nobody to sweep up the fragments of all that glassware?"

"No, the fragments of the butler."

The new experiment proved a delightful success; it was like some pleasant game. They were but two in family, not very long married, in robust health, and of rather bohemian tastes. They decorated the little kitchen with blue plates, put a flowered Dutch curtain and pots of geranium in the window, and made it one of the most attractive apartments in the house. When the notion took them, they had only to turn the key and walk out and dine in town at a restaurant. McArthur, as has been explained, was inclined to discontent. One evening, at dinner, he said :

"I have asked Currituck to come up and lunch with us to-morrow."

"Very well, I will get ready for him. And, by the way, who is Currituck?"

"His chief title to distinction is that he has a good deal of money. We were fellow engi-

neers together as students, but he has never had any need to practice, while I—”

“Yes, you, poor, boy, must work so hard, and construct famous bridges, aqueducts and tunnels. But you will become greater and richer than any of them, yet.”

“Currituck is on the move about the world a great deal ; he has been ranching and mining in the West of late years, and he is going to sail for somewhere else in a few days.”

“And he comes to bid you good-by?”

“No, not at all ; but he has had an idea, from my connection with public works in this part of town, that I ought to be a good judge of real estate, and he has trusted me to make a small investment for him. I often tried to get him up here before, but he would never do it. Now he comes of his own accord. We will have lunch first, and go and look at the lots afterward. I should not be sorry if he felt inclined to do a little more in the same line ; the commissions come in very handy, and it does not take much time.”

“Oh, I *wish* he would.”

“But we must have a servant. He will

think a man who has been able to feather his nest no better than this, no proper manager of his affairs."

"If he's an intimate friend of yours, I'm sure he'll understand it, and make all the more of us for it."

"We took our diplomas together; and I see him about once in every five or ten years; I don't know whether you call that being an intimate friend or not. He was a most conventional person in those days, fastidious in dress, manners, and everything else; and it takes a lot of imagination and poetry to appreciate this sort of thing."

"Then what a poetess *I* must be."

"You have got to keep up appearances; you have got to take a degenerate world as you find it," continued the husband, airing his pessimism. "Don't you suppose I would have got that bridge up in Ulster county the other day—after they had approved my design and all—if the committee had come down here and found me a member of all the leading clubs, and living in imposing style? Don't you suppose my jokes and stories would be better appreciated

if they were heard over solid mahogany and the laughter they occasioned echoed through lofty drawing-rooms?"

"Lofty ceilings are not the style at present."

"Well, low-ceiled drawing-rooms then. Don't you suppose—"

"Yes, my poor, unappreciated genius, I suppose everything. But there is no possibility of getting a servant at short notice, and I have so good a memory I feel as if I never wanted to see another one in the house, any way."

"Oh, very well, very well!"

But no sooner was this settled than—

"I have an idea!" exclaimed the young housekeeper. She jumped up in the elation of it and waltzed gayly around the room.

"An idea! No, really? You alarm me."

"I'll be the servant. I'll play the maid,"

"Nonsense! Borrow your aunt's waitress, just for three or four hours, for this one occasion."

"It can't be done: Rosette was in here only this morning complaining of all the trouble her mother is having. They give a large lunch-

party, to-morrow, themselves. Currituck has never seen me, and Mrs. Crawford, who played Belinda in 'Our Boys,' showed me how to draw lines on my face, and make up so he would never know me if he ever should."

"Do you mean that you are really 'game' for such an escapade?" asked McArthur, admiringly.

She struck her hand into his after the approved manner of conspirators, and, seizing a dust-brush, took with its aid various attitudes supposed to be peculiar to stage soubrettes.

"Haven't I sworn to love, honor, and obey?" she returned. "What does that mean if I can't be a waiting-maid a little if I like?—You can say I had an invitation to visit my family out of town, you know. And so I had—though I didn't accept it. You will regret that I could not have had the very great pleasure of meeting him, and all that."

"Don't give yourself much pains about costume; he's a particularly unobservant person where women are concerned, and would never notice."

"I'll make a perfect guy of myself," re-

sponded Mrs. McArthur with enthusiasm. "I haven't studied our valuable domestics for nothing."

"I wouldn't make *too* much of a guy of myself," suggested McArthur, with an air of moderation.

"No, not too much, only just enough.—You'll see."

"What name will you have? You must take an easy one, that I shan't be likely to forget."

"Why not keep my own?"

"He may by some chance have heard it, or may hear it hereafter, and complications would arise."

"Suppose I take Rosette's, then. You won't forget that."

"Very good! Shall we let Rosette into the secret? She would enjoy it immensely."

"No; it may prove a failure, and then we wouldn't like to have her know. Let's wait till it's over."

At the appointed hour the guest arrived. McArthur had been detained from home that morning by some untoward accident, and when

he arrived Currituck was already installed in the little library, and inspecting some few odd curiosities there. Mrs. McArthur was engaged at the rear. Her husband went to seek her, inquiringly; but she concealed herself and called out from the kitchen:

"It's all right. I let him in. I'll ring the little bell when I am ready; and be sure you don't keep me waiting."

Currituck had changed a good deal, and not for the better, since the host saw him last. He had grown stouter, wrinkled, and red-faced, and he knitted his brows in a brusque, arbitrary way. When the signal for lunch was at length given he started for the dining-room with alacrity.

"A favorable sign," reflected McArthur; "he has a good appetite at any rate."

The two sat down at table, tucked in their very fresh white napkins, and attacked the first course, appetizingly laid out before them.

"I shall have to apologize for entertaining you in free-and-easy bachelor fashion," said the host, choking down his qualms of conscience; "Mrs. McArthur had an invitation from her

parents to go and spend a fortnight with them."

"Ya-as, ya-as, sorry," returned the visitor, engaged upon his oysters with an air denoting that the existence of any Mrs. McArthur was a matter of the supremest indifference to him.

"It will be a source of great regret to her not to have had the pleasure of meeting you; but perhaps at some other time—"

It was at this moment that the new maid drew back the little *portière* across the door separating the dining-room from the kitchen, and made her dramatic entry. Her husband suspended the operations of his knife and fork for a moment in amazement. As to Mr. Currituck, who had seen her already, he beamed with a most satisfied smile of recognition.

Mrs. McArthur was round, plump, and very pretty, and had never appeared to better advantage than in her present costume. Her dimpled cheeks, flushed with excitement and the warmth of the cooking, glowed delicate pink. She had put on a simple gown of pink gingham, selected from her summer wardrobe, a large white apron crisply starched and a

most coquettish white cap of equal freshness. It was a *coup de théâtre*, all charmingly imagined from the point of view of effect, but a good deal lacking in probability, as it were.

But no sooner had she left the room than he poked his knife facetiously in the air towards McArthur, exclaiming:

“Eh, sly dog! sly dog!”

“What do you mean?”

“Wife away, eh? aha! oho! eh?”

“Oh, I assure you—” protested the host, endeavoring to assume an air of formal dignity.

Somehow he found the hilarious understanding and quick intelligence he had expected to have with his ingenious and lively confederate missing. For his own part he had a very constrained feeling. Currituck on the other hand, alleged to be so unobservant, followed her movements with such a pleased avidity it seemed as if she drew a tangible part of him along with her. She was flustered at first, but finding herself undetected regained her self-command. She directed sly, amusing pantomime at her husband, served Carrituck with a flattering *empressement*, not free from

coquetry ; she stood about in a variety of captivating attitudes, and showed a smiling interest in all the conversation.

"Don't *smile!*" telegraphed McArthur energetically, seizing a half-favorable moment for doing so.

"Seems an uncommonly nice girl, that," said Currituck, when she was again absent, having been frowned down in his levity.

"Yes, Rosette is a rather good sort of a girl," languidly.

"Why, she's a regular beauty ; don't you think so ?"

"Can't say I've ever thought deeply on the subject," said the master of the house, affecting the utmost indifference.

"You're a cool fellow to trust yourself this way. It wouldn't be safe for me ; it wouldn't, I assure you."

"You were saying, in ranching now the profits are much reduced ?" with a yawn.

"Looks nice enough to eat with a spoon," Currituck persisted incorrigibly. "Wonderfully *refined* way with her — nice voice too."

"Don't *speak!*" signaled McArthur to the maid with yet greater energy than before.

"As I recollect you, you used to be very indifferent to petticoats," he continued with Currituck.

"Oh, bless you! that's a mistake. I may not have shown it, but I have a great eye for good looks."

How could McArthur have been so in error? His wife's conduct was doubly preposterous. If he could only have seen her in time, how peremptorily he would have put a stop to any such business.

"If ranching be so much overdone, it makes these Inwood lots all the more promising," he said, making another push to change the conversation.

The fictitious Rosette here entered with a tray of sweetbreads and green peas. It was rather heavy for her delicate wrists, and besides an end of the door-curtain embarrassed her. Mr. Currituck gallantly leaped up and relieved her, taking the tray from her hands and setting it upon a side-table. He resumed his place, however, with a somewhat shame-

faced air as if he had forgotten himself. This capped the climax.

The host felt it was high time to take a vigorous step in the direction of keeping up the illusion, or all would be lost. He looked for an opportunity and presently found one.

"Rosette," he exclaimed sharply, "do be more careful how you serve that salad; you have rubbed the bowl against Mr. Currituck's collar!"

She was serving the salad properly in every particular, but she was startled by this sudden admonition; so was Currituck, who threw up his hand. She let go the handsome china bowl, and it fell to the floor with a crash, breaking in a dozen pieces.

"There, that will do," said McArthur, loathing himself at this unlooked-for result. "You may go now; don't come in again till you are called."

"Oh, I beg—" interposed Currituck. "It was my fault—it must have been. We can't get on without so lovely—that is, so excellent a waitress."

"Oh, if *you* wish it, to be sure!" re-

sponded McArthur, with strongly satirical meaning.

But the spirit had gone out of the adventure for Mrs. McArthur. She went to the kitchen and wept bitterly over the reprimand and her salad bowl. She presented herself after this but briefly.

When she was in the room Mr. Currituck was almost as much flustered as she. She brought him cheese, and he absently slid off a whole Camembert upon his plate, as if it had been an ice. He squeezed orange juice in his coffee, and put mustard on his brandy-peaches.

The two men retired to the little study to enjoy a smoke before setting out on their quest.

"Isn't she somebody out of the common? Isn't she a superior person in some way?" the guest began anew.

"Who?" asked McArthur, still playing his ineffectual game of indifference.

"Your Rosette, the Hebe who condescends to serve you, unworthy that you are, with those hands, that shape, that blooming color,

those dark eyes, full of a merry yet languishing archness."

"Languishing archness?" Oh, Mrs. McArthur should hear of this to her cost.

The victim replied: "Mrs. McArthur likes to have somebody respectable about her. Her references are good, if that is what you mean—though you can't put much trust in references, either, for people will sign almost any thing nowadays."

"No; but hasn't she good connections? Isn't she in reduced circumstances? Hasn't she aspirations above her station—and that sort of thing?"

"Not unless it be to put up the price of crockery; I suspect her of being in league with the manufacturers.—You saw for yourself."

"Do you know there's a lot of nonsense in our talk about 'station,' here in America. There is and can be but one station," said the visitor, in a philosophizing way.

"I believe he fell wildly in love with you," said McArthur to his wife on returning home that evening.

"I appreciate the distinguished compliment. As he is to sail again in a day or two, I suppose it can do no great harm."

"Yes; but I had to keep checking his impertinent allusions to you all the afternoon, and I suppose he's so incensed with me there's an end of all our business transactions."

"Oh, I hope not."

"I thought you were going to 'make a guy' of yourself?"

"I changed my mind about it, and I thought I would give you a pleasant surprise. It isn't very nice to have to make yourself look ugly before strangers, the first time. How would *you* like it?—And it was much more to your credit to have a neat servant than a frowsy one."

"But you were so confoundedly *chic*; you don't see that kind of thing outside of opera bouffe. You encouraged his forwardness."

"You never want another man to look at me—not the most insignificant; I've often noticed it," and she sobbed.

"No, *no*, dearest; I only mean that—if—under the circumstances—you had been a lit-

tle more like real life. Why, he said, himself, you were sweet enough to eat with a spoon!"

"*Did* he say that?"

"Yes; and that wasn't more than half the real truth. I *had* to appear to scold you, you know, to keep up appearances; I was in mortal dread lest he should find us out."

"She was mollified by the compliment. "Yes, I understood that perfectly," she said, "But what did you mean by telling me he was indifferent to women? He's one of the most susceptible men I ever saw."

"I *thought* so, hang it! That is one of the mistakes we make about our friends."

In the midst of this there was a jingle at the door-bell and Cousin Rosette came running up the stairs in her usual lively way.

So amused was this real Rosette when she heard all that happened, that no seriousness of mood could stand before her irresistible gale of merriment.

"You don't half appreciate it, not half," she declared, overwhelming them with reproaches for not having made her a participant. "Oh,

why *didn't* you let me know? Why didn't you take me in it?"

"What low common taste!" she commented presently, "Who would have thought he could be so smitten by a mere servant-girl?"

"Well, I must say!" protested Mrs. McArthur, "am I a mere servant-girl? Do I look it?"

"No; that is just where all the trouble comes in; you don't look it," rejoined her husband.

"Well, I hope *not*."

"The question is," said McArthur judicially, "whether he ought to be scorned for a low, unworthy passion, or admired for his superior discernment. I fear we do him injustice. Yes, he is entitled to the credit of detecting true loveliness and refinement under every disguise. *Et vera incessu patuit dea*.—And the veritable goddess stood revealed by her gait."

"But now what is to be done?"

"As he is to sail away somewhere in a day or two," said the real Rosette, "I do not see a pressing need of doing any thing."

"I feel it in my bones he will return; we have not got rid of him yet," said McArthur.

His predictions were verified. Currituck returned again in two days. He rubbed his hands together, gazed about a good deal in a nervous way, and seemed to have had no particular object in coming. As he was taking leave, however, he darted suddenly into the dining-room, under pretext of looking once more at a certain engraving there ; but Mrs. McArthur had been prepared for him, and his artful attempt to happen upon the person of whom he was in search by strategy was frustrated.

Yet again he came in the same aimless way. He said he had postponed his sailing for a week. As the pretty maid was not visible this time any more than the other, he inquired for her.

"She is not in," was all the response he received.

"Does she remember me? Has she spoken of me since? It's a whim of mine ; I'd really like to know."

"I should judge you had offended her ; in my opinion, she took a strong dislike to you," McArthur replied,

The visitor went off in dudgeon, and McArthur resigned himself to the loss of this friend and patron as inevitable. He had opened the door himself, pulling the handle that communicated with it from the landing above, while his wife had hastily betaken herself to hiding. They began henceforth to reconnoiter all visitors from the window before admitting them. Mrs. McArthur hardly ventured out-of-doors at all for a while, but dispatched her commissions as much as possible by proxy. It was thought Currituck was seen watching the house from a distance.

Currituck did, in very fact, watch the house from a distance. How tantalizing not to be able to go near, for fear of being recognized! He was rewarded by seeing a fascinating person come forth and enter occasionally. Sometimes she would seem stouter and again more slender than his Rosette; but there were certain familiar things about her in which he could not be mistaken. What a pretty hat and jacket she wore! what excellent quiet taste she had! Perhaps these were her mistress' clothes; but if so, undoubtedly she wore them with a

grace to which her mistress could never aspire.

He dared to follow her once, with great circumspection. She went to a shabby quarter, and entered a poor habitation. From some squalid children playing about the entrance he was just about to inquire the name and circumstances of the inmates, when she came forth and confused his plans. She supported for a short distance the steps of a tall, gaunt, old woman, in rusty black, who bore herself with a certain comic stateliness and had a very bad cough. When she had left this old woman, he threw himself in her way, at various cross-walks, and looked earnestly for some sign of her recognition; but she passed him as if she had never seen him before.

That afternoon Rosette was again at the McArthurs'.

"Do you know," said she, "I think your Mr. Currituck was inclined to bestow his attentions on *me* yesterday. I am sure I recognized him, from the description. I went to see my 'lone widow woman,' Mrs. Finnegan, to ask after her cough, and he—"

"She makes the most of that cough, for your benefit, Rosette. What with paying her board in the country in summer, and taking her tonics and foot-warmers in winter, you are a perfect slave to her."

"That is not the point at present. Your friend was over that way, and perhaps mistook me for you. They say we look alike."

"I never could see the resemblance that some people make so much of—though, of course, I should feel greatly flattered if it were so."

"Nor I either—though I should be only too highly delighted if I could believe it."

It was dusk when the last speaker rose to go to her home.

"Rosette, that man may be still hanging about, and who knows but he may *speak* to you?" expostulated the mistress of the house.

"Nonsense! it is only a step; and I must be at dinner on time to-day, to get ready to go out this evening. Have you decided what to wear at the Assembly Ball yet?" And she was off, not waiting for an answer.

A portion of her brief journey lay along the

massive granite wall that skirts the park-like Trinity cemetery. The Tenth Avenue cable cars ran in the street, and across the way were cheerful, brightly-lighted shops, so that it was not a place for alarm, though rather secluded and dim.

In this spot, so favoring adventure, Currituck came up and accosted her for her cousin. There was in truth no small resemblance between the two. Rosette was of exactly the same height as her cousin, a year or two younger, more slender, yet rounder, and had the same features, and they could wear each other's dresses.

Currituck's voice was uncertain, and he breathed hard in the evident agitation of his bold stroke.

"I beg your pardon. My purpose in addressing you is most honorable. Perhaps you do not recognize me; but I had the pleasure of meeting you at—er—at lunch at McArthur's. You were there, you know. You—I was the one that—er—you—"

Rosette had averted her head and involun-

tarily quickened her pace, but Currituck quickened his also.

"You must try to excuse this method of making your acquaintance. You will understand that, under the circumstances, I couldn't very well do anything else. My object was—I—er—wanted to say, you know, that when you broke that dish I didn't mind in the least. Bless you, no, I didn't care if you broke all his dishes."

Rosette managed to pull down over her face a little veil she wore, answered only in the merest monosyllables, saying to him, "Yes, sir," and "No, sir." Her first impulse had been to fly from him, but she felt a certain duty to the McArthurs to keep up the illusion. Besides, she smiled to herself at the good story she was going to have to tell about it afterwards.

"Isn't the work pretty hard? Aren't you tired of a task-master so unappreciative of—of such loveliness?" the intruder continued sentimentally. "Do you know, there was something about you from the first glimpse I had of you—"

But they had now traversed the obscure

part of the promenade and come under the bright gas-light again, and she left him so abruptly that it almost took his breath away.

"I've had such an adventure! I've had such an adventure!" she screamed, bursting into the McArthurs' later in the evening to tell them all about it.

"What *do* you think was the most ridiculous thing he said to me? He took me for a daughter of the Finnegan. He saw me walk with her, you know. He commended my filial devotion, and said he would be glad to do something to make the condition of such a worthy parent more comfortable. I was *so* annoyed, I forgot for the moment my supposed character, and came near getting you into all sorts of trouble. 'Ah, only a friend?' he answered, 'well, of course, we all need a little society, but you must have better.' Shades of the Van Red Hooks—we are distantly connected, you know—what an idea!"

"He is a lunatic!" exclaimed McArthur, impatiently.

"Not at all; he's a real nice old thing. He isn't half as bad-looking as you said, either,

He must be dreadfully in love with me to act so."

"In love with *you*? Well, I like that!" rejoined Mrs. McArthur. "Why, he has scarcely ever seen you."

"He calls me Rosette, and he has seen me a number of times."

"Who was it that dressed up in costume and waited on him?"

"Go on ladies, don't mind me! It's a noble rivalry. Can you think of any thing I can do to forward it?" exclaimed McArthur. "Currituck has apparently given up all intention of sailing. Once you could not drag him here for love nor money, and now he is coming all the time. What is to be done?" McArthur asked himself for the twentieth time. "If he comes again," he finally determined, "I'll settle him."

Currituck returned, and began, as with a fixed purpose in his eye, to speak anew of the captivating maid.

"She is gone; we had to discharge her," responded McArthur, barely civil.

"You have discharged that paragon of per-

fection, that compendium of the loves and graces?"

"Her airs and graces might do very well for you who only had to stand her a few moments, but she was altogether too forward for us. That sort of person is apt to be."

"That sort of person! that—and where do you think I can find her again?"

"I don't know. Perhaps at an intelligence office."

"Gone?—an intelligence office!" gasped the visitor.

"You may have noticed I was rather partial to her?" he said, after some moments spent in overcoming his agitation.

"I judged so from a few small indications," responded his hearer dryly.

"I was rather hoping you would help me along with the affair. That is what I came to see about to-day."

"Oh, come now, brother Currituck, you really couldn't expect me—a married man—to encourage such an affair? What would my wife think of it? She's at home now, by the way."

"Oh, I hope she doesn't know about it yet," returned the other, nervously. "My intentions are quite straightforward. Yes, I have at length come to that conclusion—I want to marry that charming girl!"

"To marry her?" echoed McArthur, aghast, for the better the intentions of the other, by so much the worse his own predicament. "But, as I was saying here only the other day, you used to be such a fastidious person in all matters of—of social etiquette and convention."

"But a man can't knock around the world all these years as I have done without getting a lot of it taken out of him. I've seen the folly of many of my old ideas; I now go for reality instead of humbugging imitations."

"Heavens!" inwardly groaned McArthur, "why did we give ourselves so much trouble with a man like this, about the lack of a servant?"

"This matter of station is all mere caprice at best. Out among the great ranching and mining interests your Rosette would be a regular countess or duchess; there wouldn't be

a wife that could approach her," Currituck went on.

"Why, yes; as to looks she's well enough."

"That reminds me, I was intending to ask you about her education?"

"All I know is that another servant once left complaining there was too little of it for *her*. From that I judge it's pretty defective."

"That could be remedied, of course," said Currituck, hastily, "The great thing is to get a person that suits you. Now it may surprise you to hear that I have been going about for years with a certain ideal of feminine loveliness in my head."

"It does surprise me to hear it; it does, indeed. I had thought, as I told you some time ago, you were an incorrigible bachelor, who took no interest in such things."

"Not at all. I was not in the least anxious to marry—having early remarked the crying evils of the marriage state—and I determined I would not do so until I had met with my ideal. Instead of being callous, as you supposed, I have been looking at women with a

great deal of attention; but my preconceived idea served me as a safeguard."

"But how did you form this ideal? How did you happen to have it?"

"It was composed much after the manner of the Greek slave—the head from one model, the hand or foot from another, and so on. If I saw anywhere an especial bit of perfection, I included it. I said to myself, 'I will not marry a woman without such and such a nose.' 'I will have just that lovely arching brow and no other.' 'I must have that peculiar roundness and firmness of the chin.' 'I will take nothing less than that fascinating poise of the head,' and so on throughout. In particular I wanted a general smiling piquancy. Would you believe it, your beautiful maid, who did us the honor to wait upon us at luncheon, united all the perfections I demanded as I had never expected to see them united in the world. She has the figure, the nose, the eye to a dot."

"Good gracious! you don't tell me so!"

"When I had fully realized this striking circumstance, was it wonderful that I should find myself overpowered? Ought I let any mere

trifle of a matter of station interfere with such manifest destiny? It was clear that I was ordained to marry her, and I shall do it or perish in the attempt."

"Are you—can you be serious?"

"Serious to the last degree," returned Currituck, with firmly pursed lips.

The real Rosette here occurred to McArthur; but he had taken a certain position and could not go back on his own statements. He could only say:

"Wait a moment. I beg you to pause a little. Certain types of people are found in certain places just as freckled white horses are plentiful in certain parts of New Jersey. I have no doubt a dozen girls corresponding to the type of looks you prefer can be found around here. I'll tell you what I will do; come up and go to the Assembly ball with me next Thursday night, and I'll guarantee to introduce you to one I have in my mind's eye at present who fills the bill in every particular."

"I'll do it!" assented Currituck, eagerly. "It will be useless, no doubt; but I'll take every favorable chance, make every effort, in

the first place, to carry the thing out in a regular way."

McArthur reported to his wife and her cousin what had taken place.

"Since he is only in love with a type, the thing to do is to introduce him to Rosette, who corresponds to it, and let him marry her. Then we will own up and get out of the scrape."

"Let Rosette have something to say about it for herself," put in that young woman, sharply.

"He is an unexceptional *parti*, rich, educated, traveled, and gallant, as you see," persevered McArthur. "Your affair with young Tompkins is fortunately off just now, I believe, and Currituck will make exactly the husband for you. It will be an excellent thing all around."

"I'm not to be disposed of as a sample of a peculiar type of female, thank you! And, while we are on the subject, Mr. Tompkins is not the only admirer in the world, either."

"But you said Mr. Currituck was 'a real nice old thing,' and you liked his looks,"

"Now I say—if you are so absurd—I *don't* like his looks, and I wouldn't take him for a gift. I shall not go to the Assembly ball if he is to be there.—I care very little about it any way, and had thought of going to town instead."

"And I know I never could consent to explain our joke to him," added Mrs. McArthur. "I should not be able to hold up my head. If it hadn't gone so *far*, you know. And what would he think of you as a business man if he found you had engaged in such a thing? He would tell it everywhere, and ruin you utterly."

"There is something in what you say. Probably this must remain one of those dark secrets which we are condemned to carry unconfessed to our graves. The only other thing remaining to be done," said McArthur, "is this."

They waited in suspense for his new plan.

"We must now get a servant—a real one—and ask Currituck to dinner. You," to Mrs. McArthur, "must be there this time; but, whereas you were yourself before, now you

must really make up into an unrecognizable character. Finding you at home, any possible suspicion of his on that score will be allayed; he will see the new servant, and be satisfied that the fictitious Rosette has really gone; he will go to the Assembly with me, and there will be nobody corresponding to his ideal. Then at last he will be satisfied of the uselessness of his quest in these parts, and stay away—perhaps even sail away, as he has so often promised to do—and leave us at peace forevermore.”

“Oh, I can’t undertake any more masquerading, after all this experience has cost us,” objected Mrs. McArthur.

“It is one of the penalties of duplicity that it has to go on. A second step is incumbent upon us to cover up the first. Then I trust we shall be done with it for good.”

“But the new servant, what will she think of my sitting at my own table in disguise? It will put us in her power.”

“We’ll pretend it’s only a little way you have, of a piece with your humor. You must do it again some time when there is nobody

but ourselves, and then she'll think no more of it."

"Alas, a *third* step!" lamented Mrs. McArthur, dolefully.

She did not at all like the prospect. Nevertheless, she set about engaging the servant. The day she was to have gone to town for the purpose she was overtaken by a complication of duties, and Rosette volunteered to attend to it for her.

"I've got to go, any way," she said, "to match the trimming for my braided skirt and get some ribbon for the pug's collar; and I can do it just as well as not."

"Don't go to Clamfoot's; they all want at least fifty dollars a month there," said the young matron as she was starting. "Don't go to that Gulthorp's. It advertises as a Christian training-school, but most likely all the girls there have just come off Blackwell's Island, instead."

"Shall I try Brixton's?"

"Oh, horrors! no! I engaged six in succession from there, last time, and not one of them ever came. If you hear the girl you hire

“speak of going after her things, don't take your eyes off her. Bring her along on the instant, or you'll never get her. We'll *send* for her wardrobe, or she can have mine. How *can* they be so unreliable?”

“It's only a delicate native politeness on their part,” suggested McArthur. “They don't like to hurt your feelings by refusing on the spot, so they merely leave you in the lurch. I've often done the same thing myself.”

“Gilbert McArthur, you never have!”

“Well, I mean, I've often felt like it.”

“Don't be afraid, I'll find one somewhere. I'll get you a good girl,” called Rosette and she hurried off.

She went to Mugway's, on Fourth Avenue. There were but few servants present as yet, it being their custom to take things quite easy in the morning. She therefore sat down to wait for them, placing herself in one of a long row of vacant chairs in such a position as to observe those who came in. She cross-examined one or two of these, who asked her, in return, “How many's in family?” “Is it a flat?” and “Is it the country?”

Then what was her surprise to see Currituck enter!

He was haunting the intelligence offices, and had seen her through the window. She did not see him till he was almost upon her. He came and stood before her and said "Good-morning!" with an air of profound respect. She first turned her head squarely to the right, then to the left, then bent it very low, pretending to be searching for something in her pocket, and made him no answer.

This embarrassing conduct only defeated its own end, for Mr. Currituck was forced by his very awkwardness to walk into the next room, where the manager's assistant sat at a desk.

"Who is that girl—at this end of the row of chairs?" he asked the man; and "what kind of a place does she want?"

"She ain't no girl; she's come to get one, herself," was the reply.

"Ah yes, what name did you say?" insinuatingly.

The man glared at him in suspicion. He nervously put on the desk about twice the usual fee.

"Mrs. G. McArthur—Washington Heights,—girl for general housework," then said the agent.

"Would you mind my sitting down?" asked Mr. Currituck, faintly.

"Cert'nly—have a chair."

Currituck drew up close to him, and there saw the name and address, on the register, with his own eyes.

"You don't mean that this is Mrs. McArthur in person?" he suggested.

"I guess I've seen her here often enough to know."

To say that Mr. Currituck was astounded would be putting it mildly: he was stricken with veritable anguish. He had had a wild gleam of exultation for a moment when the man had said—though he hardly believed him—that she was not a servant; and it appeared he need not make a *mésalliance* after all; but now—she proved to be the wife of another; she was utterly beyond his reach; all his hopes were at an end.

A light broke in upon him too—something like a true explanation of the affair—he was

the victim of a masquerade. "For some reason they are afraid to confess to me," said he. "All the twistings and turnings of McArthur, and his pretense that he knows somebody else corresponding to the same type are but subterfuges to divert me by little and little from the pursuit."

Rosette recognized that flight would now be of no avail. The two men were looking out at her and discussing her. Her conduct had been supremely silly. She knew the consideration in which Currituck was held by the McArthurs, as an investor of funds at least, and open rudeness to him would not do, even if any policy whatever could be subserved by it. She saw herself placed in an extremely difficult position; the moment for an explanation of some sort was at hand, and the whole responsibility of betraying the secret, or of persisting in it against all semblance of probability, was to be thrown upon her slender shoulders. She endeavored to decide upon some plan of action, but before any was evolved, Mr. Currituck came out and again accosted her, with a very grave mien.

"I wish to apologize for my inexcusable error," said he. "May I also offer my profound thanks for all the pains you have been good enough to take for my entertainment. I did not know till just now that you were Mrs. McArthur."

"But I am not. I am nothing of the kind," rejoined Rosette, much alarmed.

"Can I be mistaken? the manager so informed me—" and he look backed uncertainly in that direction. "Did you not come here to engage a servant for the McArthur family?"

"Yes, yes, indeed ; that is true."

"But if you were a servant just discharged yourself for forwardness and impudence, you wouldn't be likely to do that."

The supreme moment had evidently come; mendacity now could only make matters worse.

"I am a cousin of theirs," said Rosette as demurely as possible. "I am Miss Dawson. Mrs. McArthur couldn't come, and I am here for her."

"Then you *were* the one?" cried Currituck, his heart giving a new bound, this time of genuine delight. She was not a servant, but a

person of education; she was unmarried, and presumably free. "Oh, I see it all," he went on rapturously: "Mrs. McArthur was away, and for a joke *you* personated the maid?—Don't let it distress you, I beg. When I thought you were Mrs. McArthur, you cannot know the profound depression I felt, now happily removed.—How should you know anything of it?" he hastened to add.

"But it was not I; I was not there, and Mrs. McArthur was *not* away," she persisted.

"You are *not* Mrs. McArthur? you were not there? you had no knowledge of it, and yet you understand my words, and I should know you among a million. How can I reconcile all this?"

Even on the theory of many examples of the same type, suggested by McArthur, he was mystified. Had he not seen this very person go in and out? Had he not held interviews with her?

"*Is* your memory so good?" asked Rosette.

"Yes, for people—especially for one who has made so overpowering an impression. For localities, no: I hunted high and low, for in-

stance, to find again the place where you went to see those poor people. If I could have found that, most likely all this confusion could have been avoided."

"You will not admit a defective memory, then?"

"Not unless I suppose you and Mrs. McArthur to look remarkably alike, which is absurd,—such coincidences don't really happen. And besides, did you not confess you broke the china bowl at the lunch?"

"I did not confess," flushing; "I only did not deny it. I felt bound to—to help keep up an illusion.—And let me tell you such coincidences do really happen."

"What happiness if I could only go back with you. Let us present ourselves before them together and tell them how much I appreciate their joke. I really never heard anything better; ha! ha! particularly since it—"

"No, no; you mustn't betray me; they would never forgive me. The secret must rest with us alone."

"Let's argue it: I've got to know some time, haven't I—unless Mrs. McArthur keeps out of

sight forever, or I leave the country. I don't want to do that, for to tell you the truth I had been thinking of a few operations with McArthur that would help us both in a financial way. Besides, what's the use of turning a jolly thing into a funeral. It's capital, I tell you, capital!"

His laugh may have had a slightly hollow sound, but there was no malice in it.

"But a servant?" said Rosette; "I dare not go back without one, after this."

"I know of a perfect treasure, one who'll live in a flat, or a light-house, or up in a balloon if need be, and the less wages you pay her the better she likes it. By great good luck I happened to see her in the last intelligence office I called at. We'll take her along as a peace offering."

Currituck ingratiated himself so well with her on their way homeward that Rosette had determined she *would* go to the Assembly Ball after all.

The surprise of the McArthurs on seeing them walk in together may well be imagined. Mrs. McArthur, at first about to take flight,

was stopped and met with the disclosure, which—so well satisfied was she with her respite from further deception—she welcomed it with positive joy.

“Honors are easy, old fellow; honors are easy. It's six of one and half a dozen of the other,” cried Currituck to McArthur in a hearty way.

“Why, if you think so; easy they are,” responded McArthur, with equal good-nature.

The comic note was struck, and one item after another of the general embarrassment was recalled and laughed over to the heart's content of all.

In the midst of this Currituck was looking inquiringly at Rosette, comparing her, feature by feature, with her cousin. There was a good deal of hopefulness in his look too.

“The resemblance is nothing like so close as I would have sworn to in advance,” said he, “and it's not to my credit for accuracy.—Still, there's quite resemblance enough; and, if I'm not mistaken, this lunch at McArthur's is going to be one of the very best things that ever happened to me.”

NEAR THE ROSE.

IT was in Stambûl, the peculiarly Turkish quarter of Constantinople. The men had met at the foot of the venerable Burnt Pillar of Constantine the Great.

"By the way, Lysicrates Stauros, a word with you!" said the elder of the men, turning back as if struck by a sudden thought: "Can you tell me anything about Pandeli Panjiri?"

"He has quite recovered; his illness was nothing serious; he has been about, as usual, for some little time," replied the other.

He found himself considerably surprised at being thus addressed, for the questioner was the Armenian Cræsus, Agob Oglou, and he but a young clerk in a broker's office on the Stock Exchange.

"I thought I would ask, as I see you with him rather often," said Agob Oglou, indiffer-

ently, while a searching glance showed a much greater interest than his words expressed.

"We are relations; my mother and Mr. Panjiri are cousins; I am treated almost like one of the family."

"Ah, cousins?" murmured the merchant when going away, "that is it; then it may not mean so much after all."

He crossed the bridge of the Sultana Validé amid a glorious prospect, swimming in light and colors, and, paying but small heed to this or to the picturesque tide of travel ever going and coming upon it, went to his home at Pera. There he threw himself down in his *sachnis-chiri*, the bay-window, to reflect.

There was nothing heroic about Agob Oglou, either in looks or disposition. He was small, pock-marked, slow in speech and diffident in manner. His father had left him at the age of thirty-seven master of a great business in which he was almost wholly absorbed. He had a box at the opera in which he hardly ever set foot, and his summer palace at the Princes Islands might as well have belonged to somebody else. It would be difficult to say in just

what the amusements of this humdrum Cræsus consisted. If he occasionally went to some entertainment at the house of a rich brother merchant, even there it was rather to talk over business matters in a corner than to avail himself of the festal opportunities offered.

On Sundays and holidays he looked over papers at leisure in his bay-window. This was the place where the women of a household usually sat, in pleasant gossip, with their embroidery; but there were no women now in the house of Agob Oglou. Even his mother, who had presided over the establishment till lately, was dead, and he was very much of an old bachelor indeed.

One day, while sitting in his *sachnischiri*, he saw a beautiful girl enter the Armenian church of Saint Agob, across the way. Then as his papers did not confine him too closely, he watched for her to come out again. He rather wondered why he had never noticed her before, but it was, in fact, her first visit there, having just left school, a French school at Pancaldi, where she had been educated. He formed the habit of looking for her every Sunday. Some-

times she came with adult members of her family, sometimes with young children, sometimes though rarely, alone. There was also, occasionally, a young man along, whom he remembered as a clerk presenting drafts at his counting-room from the Stock Exchange. The presence of this young man, after his interest had become fully aroused, occasioned him keen pangs of jealousy.

After this process of watching had gone on for quite a while, his great house began to seem lonesome to him. He would walk through the spacious parlors, the music-room, the upper chambers, and surprise himself thinking how much pleasanter all that would be with just the right kind of a mistress over it—such a one, for instance, as the sweet young girl across the way.

How perfectly enchanting she was! Her luxuriant hair and lustrous dark eyes had the loveliest tones of hazel-brown in them; her skin was white as milk; she had a vivacious and, at the same time, entirely modest manner. It was her intelligent liveliness that particularly pleased Agob, as the women of his own

nation, those he knew the best, were apt to be rather slow and heavy ; they appealed to the senses but not so much to the intellect. But, beyond all, what a delicious smile it was that seemed forever hovering about the corners of her perfect mouth, and just ready to break forth. When she gave it its own way it illumined the shadows of the dark porch, and even gave a touch of brightness to the gloomy priests with their heavy beards and high black hats, who appeared there at the head of processions. All this could be seen even from a distance, but Agob did not fail to see it from close quarters also. He crossed over and took his place among the crowd of worshipers, pressing up as close to her as possible, and looking for small signs of her favor—of which it must be confessed he got very few.

It did not consist with his peculiar depth of reserve to intrust his secret even to his very prudent servant, but he made a few judicious inquiries on his own account. He took much credit to himself for the way he had managed the casual meeting with Lysicrates Stauros,

which bade fair to clear away the last impediment to a definite conclusion.

"I read clearly in his face that he is in love with her," said he to himself, "but I could see just as well that he has no established footing nor assured prospect of success. There is nothing to prevent my seeking the hand of Panjiri's beautiful daughter if I want to," he concluded. "Now, do I want to?"

Accordingly he reflected and reflected and reflected. His wrestlings consumed not merely the remainder of the afternoon, but a very liberal share of the evening as well. He had allowed himself to become so dry and brittle an old stick, as it seemed, only, when his time came, to be the more easily ignited.

The clerk, Lysicrates, the same evening, made the meeting with Agob Oglou a pretext for still another of the visits to Pandeli Panjiri's family, which an uneasy conscience made him fear were not quite as well received as formerly. He was glad to have something in the way of a special message to talk about to the old folks.

Pandeli Panjiri, the shipping agent, occupied

a handsome apartment in the Avenue du Grand Opera, the West End of Pera. It was rather beyond his means, it is true, and he would have been more prudent to live among his compatriots in the distinctively Greek quarter of San Dimitri, but he was a man of sanguine disposition and fond of the good things of this world. "Let us live while we live," he would say. He had a large family, chiefly daughters, to bring up, and only slender resources to do it with. But there was one thing to be said of all the children which was the next best to fortune: they were comely, robust, had scarcely ever known a day's sickness in their lives, they inherited a hopeful temperament from both father and mother, and were endowed with the happy faculty of making friends wherever they went.

When Lysicrates entered the house that evening most of the daughters were gathered round a large center-table, playing dominos. It was a chilly night, and beneath the table was the usual brazier of hot coals, the warmth of which was kept in by the folds of an ample table-cover, the *tandouri*. He exchanged meaning

glances with Urania, and being invited to join the game, furtively pressed her hand several times under the *tandouri*. He commended himself to the young Olympia, by a present of *rakat lokoum*, fig-paste, and to Thekla by *akidé*, lemon-drops, both of a particularly choice variety—and which, not to arouse embittered jealousies, they were immediately obliged to share with Yessamina, Aspasia, the urchin Pericles, Anais, and even with baby Calypso, in her nurse's arms.

The *Kyrios*, that is to say simply "Mr." Panjiri, explained to the circle the importance of the personage who, as reported by the clerk, had so kindly inquired after his health.

"It is the more courteous of him too," he said, "since I have but the slightest personal acquaintance with him. No doubt," complacently, "he has heard of me by reputation. Well, it is a good thing for all of us to take a little interest in our neighbors, in this world."

"I know him," spake up the pretty Urania, tartly, "if you say he lives in that fine house across the way from St. Agob's Church. He is the ugly little man who stares at me so, and

sometimes pushes up so close to me I hardly know what to do. One would think he had never seen a girl before. I would often like to slap him."

She broke out into a melodious laugh at the absurdity of the idea, in which all the younger sisters gayly joined, while the *Kyria*, their mother, tried to explain that when men looked impertinently at girls it was often the latter's own fault.

"I begin to understand the secret of Mr. Agob Oglou's interest," said the broker's clerk to himself, and he fell to chewing the ends of his silky mustache in a gloomy reverie.

He was a handsome young fellow, partly of French extraction. He had been sent to Paris to complete his education, and, on returning thence, had begun commercial life at the foot of the ladder, above which point he had not climbed very far even yet. He had fallen in love with his cousin when she came home from school on a certain vacation. She returned his feeling, and they had secretly exchanged vows; but he was forever torturing himself with the fear that she would be snatched away

by some one whose only superiority would be found to consist in the cursed inequality of fortune.

Toward ten o'clock he created a diversion by going out and buying a supply of *semit*, the sweet cakes which the *semitji* hawked around, about that hour, carrying them ringed upon a long rod. The *Kyria's* taste for this homely confection availed him a short extension of his stay, but no sooner were the cakes eaten, than the *Kyrios*, in bluff, unceremonious fashion, bundled him out of the house, saying it was high time all good folks were in bed.

A little after this, the watchmen in the street beat their staves loudly upon the pavement, and cried: "*Yunghen var! Yunghen var!*" There is a fire! There is a fire! The engines ran—it was somewhere in the neighborhood—and for a while a perfect pandemonium prevailed.

No sooner was this over, than Panjiri was once more defeated in his efforts to secure repose, by the announcement of a visitor.

"Are you keeping *Ramadan* [the Mussulman Lent]? Do you fast all day and pass the

night in revelling?" he asked, unable to refrain from venting a certain ill-humor even upon so considerable a personage as this visitor proved to be, for it was no other than Agob Oglou.

"I am an Armenian, and we do not keep *Ramadan*, as you know," replied Agob.

He sat uneasily while the servant brought in the customary tray containing coffee, a glass of water and some conserve of rose-leaves, and his hand trembled in tasting these refreshments. Then he broke forth with :

"I have done myself the honor of calling, to offer myself as your son-in-law. I desire to marry your daughter."

"Ha, that is business indeed! And which one?"

"I was informed that you had but one of marriageable age. I refer to the beautiful Urania."

"Why, that's so, that's so; I might have spared myself the question. Urania is just turned eighteen and I don't suppose Olympia can be more than fourteen yet—I must ask her mother. And you could not wait till to-morrow morning for this?"

"I beg your indulgence; I am the kind of man who, when he wants something, wants it very much indeed. I had only lately come to this conclusion, and I was anxious to carry it out on the instant."

Panjiri recognized in this the same trait of prompt energy by which the great fortune his visitor enjoyed had been made. He was in secret greatly pleased with the proposition, though for the sake of dissimulating a little, he ordered his *yourgoulidion* to be brought, and the bubbling of this water-pipe acted as a soothing accompaniment to the rest of the discourse.

"I had not thought of asking any dowry," pursued Agob.

"Oh, as to that," returned the other, waving the stem of his pipe deprecatingly, as though it would have been quite convenient to him to give some millions.

"And in case I could do you any small favors in a business way, I should expect you to look to me for them, you know."

"I am in your favor," said Panjiri, now abandoning his affectations; "I will see my

daughter and acquaint you with her answer at the earliest moment. I have not the least doubt she will agree with me as to the advisability of such a union, and as to the great honor you do her."

Nor had he any such doubt; but when he made known to Urania the favor she had met with in the eyes of Agob Oglou, and the high destiny in store for her, he was met by the most downright refusal.

"Not marry him? not marry Agob Oglou?" he exclaimed in amazement.

"Not if his odious little form were entirely made up of the gold on account of which he takes such forward airs."

Every argument was applied to her in vain. The *Kyrios* did not try coercion; he was not that kind of a father. He was forced to go in despair to Agob and tell him the unpalatable truth. Agob received it grimly.

"There may be another lover," he suggested.

"Another lover, in my house, in a well-regulated family like ours, without my consent? I should say not. I should like to see anything of that kind going on indeed."

Nevertheless he questioned both his wife and Urania. Almost at the first mention of the subject Urania burst into tears and confessed the whole story.

"Lysicrates and I are engaged," she said, "and he is going to claim me in a very little while. He has only to wait till he has made his fortune."

"Till he has made his fortune," repeated the parent, with unspeakable disgust at this lack of worldly wisdom—"till he has made his fortune indeed! How long has it taken me to make my fortune, and how much fortune have I got now? Oh, the young reprobate, to stand between you and such a brilliant match as that! Let him never dare to show his face within our doors again."

In dealing with young Stauros, however, he postponed his rage to policy. Assuming his most off-hand genial manner, he said to him:

"It seems there has been some little sentimental nonsense between you and Urania—"

"Nonsense?"

"Yes,—of course, you and I as men of the world don't attach much importance to that

sort of thing; all of us have gone through more or less of it. But Urania has a decidedly finical streak in her composition. Just now she feels a trifle embarrassed. What do you think she has asked me to do? Why, to come here and see if you could have the slightest objection to her accepting an offer of marriage from the great merchant Agob Oglou—as though such an idea could ever enter your head.”

“Urania sent you to ask me that?” responded Lysicrates in an overpowering fury. His worst suspicions were confirmed, and he fell with unexpected ease into a rather transparent plot.

“She did indeed—Heaven forgive me!” in a mental aside; and Heaven would naturally forgive a little artifice to a father with so many daughters to settle in the world. “Will you just put down on a bit of paper,” he added, ingratiatingly, “that you would have no desire to interfere with so advantageous an opening? It will be more satisfactory to her. You see what a doting father I am. I am often ready to go on errands even out of all reason.”

“I will put it down on monumental brass, if

you like," replied the other with the grimmest bitterness, and he dashed off, in his utter disdain, a statement so cold and matter-of-fact that Urania, stung by this easy resignation, accepted Agob Oglou at once.

Pandeli Panjira, who had dreaded a long and losing campaign, was almost alarmed by the success of his simple stratagem. It was too good to be true; it had worked like a charm. Now it was only a question of pushing on the preparations for the wedding and keeping the lovers carefully apart till that momentous date was over.

The engagement ring was a diamond of the largest size, a jewel veritably fit for a sultana. It was followed by a pair of the loveliest India shawls, and almost every day arrived other beautiful presents—a small earnest of the fine things she was to enjoy in the future. Her younger sisters tried on or reveled in all the superb gifts, and her mother was never tired of expatiating upon the resources and potential magnificence of her son-in-law that was to be.

All this was so satisfying in the first flush of its novelty as to banish most of her early

repugnance to the match from Urania's head. And nothing seemed so utterly and absolutely driven out of her head as Lysicrates Stauros. Not that she was ever the vivacious companion to Agob Oglou that worthy man had dreamed of, but this he laid for the present to maiden modesty. Not being over-glib in talk himself, he had often to go away for sheer want of ability to keep up the conversation. By degrees, too, her baffled feeling reasserted itself.

"If he could only be the least bit in the world like Lysicrates," she repined, in a forlorn way; and again: "If he would only give me engagement-rings and shawls and a summer-palace at Prinkipo, and not come near me himself, I think I could learn to like him very much."

Her air became so dejected, her eyes so often red with weeping, and her conversation confined itself so persistently to only half-audible "Yes" and "No," that Agob Oglou at last became aware of the cause.

"I am a sensible man," he said to her father, "and it is better for me to give her up now, much as I shall suffer, rather than to suffer all

my life long on account of her indifference and dislike."

Panjiri protested that there must surely be some mistake in this matter.

"No, no," said Agob, "I know when it is winter and when it is summer; I can see when there is snow on the head of Olympus. I am a sensible man, and I want no unwilling bride."

Pandeli Panjiri thereupon went to his daughter, and said to her in a final way:

"Cease now your crying once for all. The decision is left in your own hands. Agob Oglou wants no unwilling bride. Tell him that you are happy in the prospect before you and will be a good and loving wife to him, or give up these all but fabulous prospects and have done with it. Only if you decide the wrong way don't hold me nor anybody else responsible for it afterward."

This perfect liberty of choice thus suddenly thrown upon her proved rather embarrassing. She dried her eyes and thoughtfully looked up and down and all around as if for aid in coming to a decision. Agob Oglou had never

appeared to so good advantage as in his magnanimous offer to give her up. Whenever she looked down her eyes fell upon the diamond sparkling on her white hand ; it shot up to her in return bluish gleams almost of a shrewd human intelligence.

"I will be a good and true wife to Agob Oglou," she said, smiling sweetly, as she had been used to smile of old.

Now fate, which had so long refrained from interfering, might well enough have held off its hands to the end. But this was not to be. Urania's qualms broke out anew, and having seen Lysicrates at a distance haunting the house forlornly, she bribed her maid to convey a note to him. Now this maid was in a general way on the side of youth and romance, as all good serving-maids should be, but even she could not bear to stand in the way of so brilliant a prospect for her young mistress. She took the missive to the *Kyria* instead, and asked in an artless way :

"Shall I deliver it at once, *Kokona* [Mistress]?"

"Deliver it," repeated the *Kyria*, her brow

dark as a thunder-cloud; "give it to me this instant."

Urania explained in tears, that it was only a friendly word of parting to Lysicrates, whom it did not seem fair wholly to neglect, even though he had behaved so badly. Nor was there much more than this in the contents, but it was an indication of a wavering mood, and vigilance was redoubled.

This episode would seem to have put an end to all possibility of correspondence, but on the morning of the ceremony itself, Lysicrates found means of sending Urania a communication by her little brother, Pericles. This urchin enjoying more freedom than usual, in the excitement of the occasion, ran out to gaze at one of those small street processions made in honor of the first day of a young Turkish boy's attendance at school. While he was shouting huzza! with a gusto at the youthful hero of the festival, going by on a gayly bedizened donkey, Lysicrates slipped the note, with the present of a handsome penknife, into his hand, and arranged to have him bring him back the answer under a neighboring archway.

He magnanimously offered to forgive all; he begged her to fly with him, and, to that end, to make some pretext for coming down to the confectioner's, or even to her own door-way, as if for a breath of fresh air. He would have a carriage there, and snatch her away, if need be, by main force. The answer was all the most ardent lover could desire; but this wild plan had no opportunity of being put in execution, for by accident Pandeli Panjiri happened upon his infant son and heir just as he was delivering the reply, and he endeavored to seize it. The two men had a struggle over it, in which Lysicrates succeeded; but, so far as discovery was concerned, it was just the same as if the result had been the other way.

In a little while Lysicrates Stauros came storming at the door of Pandeli Panjiri, almost beside himself, but he could obtain no admittance, and he had sense enough to know there was nothing he could accomplish there. His next resource was Agob Oglou, and he stormed even more violently at the door of the Armenian merchant.

“Admit him,” said Agob Oglou to his staid porter, Yusûf.

With his own hands he was putting the finishing touches to the bridal chamber, and to give an additional point of grim irony received the visitor there. The sight of these preparations—the modish upholstery, the little tables inlaid with ivory and pearl, the mirrors framed in gold and colors, the brazen-columned couch with its bespangled draperies, all of the freshest and costliest that money could buy, served to rob the luckless youth of any small vestige of self-control he had brought with him.

“We must fight! We must fight!” he exclaimed. “One of us must die to determine to which Urania shall belong.

“You overlook the trifling circumstance that she already belongs to me,” returned the owner of the mansion, quite coolly. “She has chosen me of her own free will, and we are to be married within the hour.”

“Here is her letter; read her opinions”; and the clerk thrust the missive in the merchant’s face with so much violence that the latter started back in much alarm.

On reading it, he bowed his head; he even beat his hand against his forehead, in his great surprise and dejection.

"It seems to interest you. Now will you give her up to me?" said the clerk sneeringly, recovering a certain coolness, and standing by like fate, with folded arms.

"Upon her own head be it—upon her own head be it!" almost screamed Agob Oglou. "Why did she not draw back while it was still time? Unhappy jade that she is, she shall go on to the bitter end. Am I to be made the laughing-stock of all Pera? All the devils in Eblis shall not take her from me now."

The proverb cautions us against the wrath of a patient man, and Agob Oglou was one of the most patient of men. He called his servants and they quickly thrust Lysicrates Stauros out of the house. There the police intervened in the affair, as being now within their province, and marched off the disorderly looking figure they laid hold upon to the station-house.

Meanwhile Urania had set up in open rebellion. "*Patera* and *Mitera* [Father and Mother]" she cried, "I will not marry Agob

Oglou." She repulsed her maids, refused to allow herself to be dressed, and the fine scheme seemed wholly at an end. But the assurance that, no matter what became of Agob Oglou, she should never see Lysicrates again, the commands and appeals of her parents, even the noise of the controversy, her physical fatigue, and something imperious—to a naturally amiable character—in the fixed hour of the ceremony so rapidly approaching, at last prevailed with her. Almost more dead than alive, she dried her eyes and suffered her wedding garments to be put upon her.

She was conveyed to the bridegroom's house in a sedan-chair, followed by her ten bridesmaids, also in sedan-chairs, with gentlemen walking beside them. She was the saddest of all brides, yet very lovely, too, in her rich white silk robe, over which hung a veil of loose silver threads, as if she were some nymph of the fountain seen through its shining spray. Agob Oglou received her at the door of his house, and led her to the seat of honor in the principal parlor above. She rose to salute each guest in turn, as etiquette demanded. The

archimandrite pronounced his benediction, the *combaro*, or best man, distributed *bon-bons* among the guests; and thus, while Lysicrates Stauros (having been soon rescued from the lock-up) was tossing like a lunatic on his bed in his own chamber, under the guard of vigilant attendants, she was made hard and fast the wife of Agob Oglou.

Now, according to all good romancers, a tragedy of some sort should here be recorded—a fatal combat between the two men, or at least an elopement. But, whether former romancers have sometimes made mistakes or whether this was a very exceptional case, nothing of the kind happened. On the contrary, after no great while, Urania showed every appearance of being wholly cured. She made Agob Oglou a most excellent wife. There was really nothing against him but his looks, and we know how easily we get over objections on that score. Perhaps she had an unusually strong sense of duty, or an uncommon feminine talent for yielding; perhaps even the invincible obstinacy Agob Oglou had shown in carrying her off in spite of herself may

have won him her regard: and no doubt the soothing influence of the ample luxury into the lap of which she had fallen had something to do with it. Tradition states, to be sure, that she once fainted away. Her husband had taken her to the terrace *café* at the great artillery barracks of Schalil Pasha, looking down over the Bosphorus, and there Lysicrates unexpectedly came in. She moped, too, when she heard by the gossip of some families she met at the *hammam* that he had lost all his savings in a desperate effort to get rich. But these, if correctly reported, were small episodes at best, without enduring influence. She grew buxom and comfortable-looking, her wonted smile returned, and when she had children to enlist her attention, it is probable that a score of Lysicrates could not have shaken her allegiance in the least.

The healing influence of time also seemed even more remarkable in the case of Lysicrates himself. What? not that Lysicrates who had written despairing verses, who had wandered in the woods at Buyukdere, which nourish the springs of the capital, and along the side of

Satan's Current at Bebek, meditating suicide, who had called upon gods and men to witness his misery, and had for a while left the country? Oh, no, that we cannot believe. Very well! but the proof of the statement is—and probably little more is needed—that within three or four years he became a suitor for the hand of the next oldest daughter, the charming Olympia. Can it be possible that Lysicrates desired to marry another of the daughters of Pandeli Panjiri? Yes, it is true. He had given over his wildness of late, and made by no means a bad start in the business way; time had thrown a haze over the old disturbance; he conciliated Panjiri, apparently dismissing all resentment, and the astute shipping-agent, who had always had some little compunctions about the past, met him half-way, and—now that things were looking up with him—thought him a very good fellow.

What is more, Lysicrates even went to Urania to induce her to aid him with her sister. She involuntarily sighed a little over such fickleness, but she felt that compensation was justly due him, and was glad if she might now

have some small part in bringing it about. Agob Oglou was absolutely set against her having any thing to do with him at first, but finding out what the object was he countenanced it, and many visits were necessary on this score.

"But you were so—so—there was so much trouble about you and my sister, how can you be in love with me?" replied the fair Olympia to his addresses, "I do not understand that."

"Oh, those things get exaggerated! You must not pay attention to all you hear. Did I not bring you fig-paste? Was I not always looking forward to your growing up? You are the perfect type of which any predecessor could only have been the faint indication."

Now, as Olympia was not more averse to being complimented than other of the fair sex at Constantinople, and he was almost her first serious admirer, and her father made no interference, it is quite possible that had she fewer distractions in other directions, things might have taken quite a serious course. But she was going to ambassadors' balls with her sister Urania and going out in her *caïque* at Prinkipo

in the summer—there were ten rowers, in suits of white Broussa silk, with red caps and sashes—and from these diversions she was suddenly rapt away by a gallant colonel of some foreign army, and there was the end of that.

Not a little tremor showed itself in Lysicrates' investments in the stock market after this event, but they were all on the right side, and he went on and became a rich man.

Once more he returned to Urania.

"I am madly in love with your adorable sister, Thekla," he said, "will you not help me with her?"

Some scorn mingled with his confidante's sympathy this time.

"Have you no memory?" she asked.

"I have only a heart, and it is crushed by the divine Thekla. Recall, I pray you, all the good you know of me in the past, and tell it to her to forward my cause."

Urania smiled at him, but with no great malice as yet.

"I shall not be averse to having you as a brother-in-law; I will do all I can for you," she said.

"You do not love me; it is not possible," the sprightly Thekla replied to his wooing.

"Did I not bring you lemon-drops? Was I not always delighted to sit by your side even when you were a child?" he argued. "You are the perfect type—"

"Oh yes, of which nobody else could ever have been more than the dim indication," she cut in mockingly. "I know, you told that to my sister."

Pandeli Panjiri not only consented in the present instance, but, since Lysicrates had become such a desirable *parti*, he was even delighted. Now, however, by a curious alternation of rôles, it was the daughter that was intractable and obdurate. She coqueted with him just the least bit in the world, and then danced off with a handsome young Russian secretary of legation, and there was the end of that also. Lysicrates was as cruelly gored upon this horn of the dilemma as he had formerly been upon the other.

Urania was the recipient of his expressions of disappointment in this affair as in that of Olympia; and many more visits were neces-

sary, though Agob Oglou by no means looked upon them with the same favoring eye when they were connected with defeat as with hopeful advance. However, Agob Oglou was suffering of late from over-zealous devotion to business, and his doctors did not permit him to give all the attention to current matters he was in the habit of doing.

When Lysicrates proposed to the next sister, Yessamina, Urania still bore with him, though distantly, but when he proposed to Aspasia, she crossed him off her books entirely. It had then become ridiculous, and a discourtesy, almost an insult to her. Yes, as the successive daughters of Pandeli Panjiri arrived at woman's estate, Lysicrates laid siege to all of them in turn, and he was by one and all rejected. Aspasia was in some respects the most fascinating of the younger set, but all were fashioned upon a most charming pattern and fortunate was she who belonged to it. Anais was black-eyed, Yessamina gray-eyed, Olympia was most plump, Rumania the most tall and slender, Aspasia the most rollicking, and Calypso the most sedate, but all had

nearly the same taking ways, the same complexion and hair, the same roundness of contour, the same half-mischievous smile hovering about the corners of their amiable mouths.

Lysicrates wooed with a gallant intrepidity ; he sent sonatas to the musical one, whole parterres of symbolic flowers to the sentimental one, and illuminated prayer-books to her who had a religious streak. But this task became increasingly difficult. The sisters naturally communicated with one another, and he was hard put to it for new expressions of tenderness and a plausible accounting for his former infatuations. Any one with a less persistent nature would have given it up long before. The later comers upon the scene laughed at him to his face, as the earlier ones had been forced to do behind his back. His compliments of a past generation had a positive moldiness in their venerable antiquity. Who could have believed this wrinkled, faded, over-amorous old fellow had once been, as reported, a handsome, dashing young man ?

These young women were so fair and flower-like that it was not possible any of them

should remain long on the parent stem. Some aspirant, more or less worthy, plucked off one after another. Even the urchin Pericles, very much grown-up, had a wife and family of his own, and was established in a flourishing export trade.

At last Calypso—she that had been baby Calypso in her nurse's arms—was wed. Then and then only did Lysicrates Stauros abandon his long and vain pursuit, a quest which was in some respects pathetic, even while amusing. Great recklessness marked his next speculations on the Stock Exchange, and he lost most of the large gains he had acquired. Nor did he stop here; he gave full head to a general eccentricity that had more and more gained upon him. He abandoned all pretense to be a conventional member of society. He let his beard grow down to his waist, till he resembled a dancing dervish, and even got so low that the boys followed him mockingly in the street. At length he took a hut and small bit of land at Pancaldi, and led a hermit existence. He alternated this with wandering among the

cypress groves of the cemeteries all about the city, or might even be found sitting on some turban-crested Moslem tomb in distant, many-domed Scutari.

Meanwhile *Urania* had crossed him off her books utterly, and perhaps hardly even knew whether he was alive or dead; for her it seemed as if he had never existed. But *Agob Oglou's* maladies went on increasing, and he died, leaving her free. There is no telling just when *Lysicrates*, in his lonely way of life, heard this news. He went no more prominently into public on account of it, but from that time he began to be more particular in his dress, and to make an effort to recover something of his former dignity, as if there were now a tribunal to which a regard for appearances was due, even though he cared nothing for them himself.

Urania's husband might have been dead a year and a half, and she was living in a state of philosophic seclusion when *Lysicrates* presented himself at her house.

"This is of no avail," he said.

"I do not understand you," she stammered. She could not but feel sorry for him. She had

hardly known him at first. His well-made black coat hung very loosely about his attenuated form, and the late removal of a bushy beard that had so long hidden his face from the sun gave his complexion a peculiar pallor; he was like an apparition.

"Who is going to pay me for my wasted life?" he demanded quite sternly. "Of you I ask it—you, Mademoiselle Urania Panjiri."

"It was not my fault," she returned, still confused. "You wrote me that release, you—"

"Ah yes, you say one thing, I say another. Well, what is the use? Providence wished it so," he interrupted. "But why does he not content us with our lot when he breaks down our most dearly cherished hopes? I wanted nothing but what was worthy and good."

Urania essayed no reply to a line of reasoning such as has probably been indulged in at some time by all of us.

"However, I have a plan," extending his hand with a certain briskness, "I am going away."

"Where will you go?"

“To America.”

“You *will* not go to those desolate wilds,” expostulated Urania, starting in genuine sympathy and horror. “You will not face an inclement climate, ferocious animals, the savage red men of Fenimore Cooper, at your age? How can there be any need of any thing so dreadful?”

“What difference can it make?” he replied, as with a sneer for his own luckless fate. “I shall not lack money; my savings have notably accumulated during my hermit life. It is very far away, that is the main consideration, and there at last perhaps I shall forget. I will live with my illusions, the children of my heart, in a realm of shadows. I wanted but one thing in this world, one face, one form, and, failing that, nothing could satisfy me. All the years of my life I have tried, and it is now too late to hope to succeed.”

“Why do you say that? Did you not court Olympia, Yessamina, Thekla, Calypso—every one of my sisters as well?”

He looked at her with a singular gaze, mournful but penetrated with the old fire.

"I cast them out of my heart"—he dashed his hand away from his breast, as if actually doing so—"they never had any real hold there. But you always remained; you know it very well, Urania Panjiri. I saw only you in them—as I can now see them faintly in you. At a certain age there was always one who approached you so nearly that I could imagine I saw your reflection in a dim mirror. But not one of them all ever equaled you nor ever can; you are peerless; you are still the most queenly, the loveliest of them all."

This was not quite true, for age had begun to tell upon Urania, but so flattering a view, even if misguided, was none the less pleasant to hear.

"Why do you think I have haunted you all these long years? Why did *they* please my fancy?" the lover went on. "You know the old saying, 'If one can not have the rose, it is pleasant to be near it.' That is the reason."

Urania remained silent, but continued to look at him with a very relenting air. A little while after this she said:

"Do not go to America! I will tell you

something, though my sisters, when they hear it, may think it strange. I did my duty well by Agob Oglou. Since you still find me beautiful, I still think you young and brave. We have even yet all the world before us."

BETWIXT AND BETWEEN.

WHEN Lieutenant Sturgeon, of the Eleventh cavalry, had settled down—after a brief acquaintance—into a warm admirer of Miss Edith Elbridge and intended to ask her hand in marriage, he became aware that Mr. J. Applegate Crump was a very interfering sort of person.

Applegate Crump, on the other hand, tired of his fashionable bachelorhood and determined to marry a debutante of the last season, who was the most beautiful, wealthy, and highly connected of them all, found a stalwart lieutenant, from Fort Schuyler—very square in the shoulders, and effusively over-gallant, after the manner of some army men—obtruding very much into his plans and opportunities.

Lieutenant Sturgeon had met her first at one of the lawn-parties near Pelham to which

some of the officers often came over—possibly at that pleasant spot for out-of-door diversions, the Country Club. As to Applegate Crump, he had always known her, as he always knew everybody of social distinction.

Applegate Crump was small and dapper, a broker in Wall Street, and his name was one of those said to be kept in newspaper offices in lists scissored off in suitable lengths as occasion requires. There could be no mistake in this, for if he was not at the particular place mentioned he ought to have been, and so it was all right. And now he had decided to become a family man, and have a rich and beautiful wife. He had been discreet about it, disguised it from the public, and only let it out by little and little, as it were, even to himself.

Lieutenant Sturgeon had resolved to make his proposal this very night. When I say "this very night," in such a way—for the dashing lieutenant communicates something of his own impetuosity to the writer—I mean the last cotillon of the "Small and Early" at Delmonico's. It was after Lent, and probably, too, the final ball of the season. New York would soon

seek new methods of amusing itself. The S. and E. was really both numerous and late—very fashionable, as a matter of course. Among the guests were Lord Stuff, Sir Peddlington Stare, the Marquis de Babilie, and all the other traveling foreigners of note who were in town at the time. The rooms were handsomely set off with tapestries, statuary, banks and festoons of flowers, and wax tapers in the chandeliers.

By an odd coincidence, Applegate Crump had resolved to propose to Miss Elbridge that evening also. And yet, there is nothing so strange about the coincidence, for she was an attractive girl to whom it is supposable a great many men might want to propose on the same evening.

On this occasion she was fair and radiant beyond words. When she stood against the fine tapestry draping the music gallery of the Hungarian band—Lander's occupied the other—she seemed like one of its own ideal figures, in the enchanted wood, only far lovelier. It was usual to say of her that she "looked like somebody in particular," which meant that she had distinction. She was easy, natural, not for-

ward, but with the manner of one who had never been forced to bow to superiors. Her married sister—almost equally fair—under whose protection she was, had made the great match with Van Red Hook Corlaer, just before. The beautiful heads of the two, seen together in profile, had an exquisite, cameo-like effect. The white neck of the elder sister inclined unduly to plumpness. That of the younger, amid its dainty laces, in the license accorded by fashion, was of a girlish purity to inspire poets and sculptors.

The two intending suitors had many interruptions, conflicted with each other, and with others in turn, and it was late before their desired opportunities came. A sensible young friend of Edith Elbridge wondered to her how she could waste so much time on this pair. But she was independent, had her whims, took neither of them seriously, and they had amused her—though the indications decidedly were that this whim was waning.

The lieutenant brought his shoulders prepared for conquest. It was Edith who said of these shoulders, that he carried them

around as if they belonged to somebody else.

"I am a man who goes straight to the point, Miss Elbridge," he began. "We rough soldiers are like that. When there's a battery to be charged, we—"

"Oh, do tell me about charging a battery; what is it like?" she interrupted. Whether she suspected his drift or not, she persisted in leading the conversation into other channels.

"It's nothing at all to facing your bright eyes. You're a regular dead shot, you know. A glance, a smile, and over a man goes, riddled through the heart."

"Do you know what I often think your heart is like, Lieutenant?"

"No, I don't, really."

"Made in compartments, like the ocean steamers. If a few of them are broken, the rest of them are all right, and the ship goes on as well as ever."

"Oh, I assure you—you are the only one—you—" he protested, mopping his brow.

He began to have the air of charging a bat-

tery himself, or, rather, one of those squares of light infantry that resist assault on every side. He squared his martial shoulders to the front, to the right, to the left, as seeking new points of attack.

"Do you know I have never heard a battle described to me. I want to hear all the particulars," she went on.

"Well, we—er—don't have them much now—not in the army."

"But you have plenty of other hardships, of course?"

"Why no, I have influence at headquarters, and generally get stationed at civilized places. I like to be about town a good deal, you know.—That's one reason why I've been thinking it would be easier for us in case you—"

"No active service? No real hardship?" arching her brows in surprise.

"Oh, as to hardships, there's the Mount Vernon Barracks, down on the Alabama River: I put up with a few months of that once. *There's* a station. Talk about war! It's in the heart of the pine woods, three miles from a boat landing—twelve miles from anywhere."

“What is called a fine strategic position, I suppose.”

“I don’t seem to—er—er—”

“An enemy couldn’t get your address, you know. You would be perfectly safe there.”

With this she cut her way through the cavalry for the time being, and made her escape. The doughty lieutenant, dissatisfied with his opening movement, carried his shoulders across the room, and withdrew to the Café, below, to seek some stronger inspiration than was to be had above for a renewed and more strenuous attack.

Next advanced J. Applegate Crump, with his proposal cut and dried. But lead up to his subject as he would, all his diplomatic approaches—beginning with the Easter weddings and the like—were of no avail. He too was repulsed, but returned before the more slowly moving lieutenant, and secured a new opportunity.

“For some dreary time past,” he now began, “all my pleasures and pursuits pall upon me; my appetite fails: my sleep is broken. One engrossing thought occupies my mind—”

"It is 'spring fever,' I know. But summer is approaching. Perhaps the coaching-parade will cure you."

"No, a hundred coaching-parades could not cure me.—By the way, you'll be going out with us as usual?"

"I shall do nothing of the sort. I consider it very bad style. The same women who get upon the drags to be stared at by all New York, pretend to be indignant if a reporter describes their dresses at a party. It's too much like a circus for *me*."

"But you went last year—you never found any fault before, you know," gasped Mr. J. Applegate Crump.

"*Don't* quote to me what I did last year, or last month, or last week, for that matter. I am not to be governed by my last year's. I should think you would know it by this time. Nothing is more tiresome—As if there were nothing new in the world."

A strange young man, but rarely seen in this circle, had been, for some time, following her about with his eyes, and his presence possibly had a disturbing effect on her conversation.

"But you'll go up to the Country Club with us, on Decoration Day. A large party. All the young society beauties are to be there."

"I have not the least claim on *that* score.—No, I shall stay in town to see the procession. The military are splendid. I love brass buttons, bayonets flashing, and banners waving."

"But society doesn't stay in town. It isn't a—a—expected, you know. And if we pillars of society don't stand by each other"—expostulated Mr. Crump in alarm. He began to fear that her ideas were almost too heterodox to base any substantial future upon.

"I often think I never want to hear the word society again."

"You say such jolly severe things, ha, ha!" laughed the other. "Well, I don't mind that, because I do the same thing myself."

His severities were about as formidable as "Good morning," or "It's a fine day."

The strange young man above-mentioned now stood directly opposite, by a doorway, gazing across with an air of keen wistfulness mingled with moody reproach. The Lieutenant came back, exuberantly ready for victory.

Miss Elbridge despatched him and Applegate Crump on specious messages. She made them search for her gloves and her fan, and then bring glasses of water in turn like buckets from a well. The young man at the doorway at last began to realize that room was being made beside her, for himself.

"You do not approve of me, Mr. Knowlton," she said to him as he joined her.

"I can't deny it, though I had not expected to say it to you in person."

"And may one ask why you condescend to honor our poor ball? Your disdain of all such matters is well known."

"To tell the truth, I couldn't sleep. The booming of the carriages about Delmonico's and all the noises of the night often disturb me—over here at my lodging close by—but tonight they seemed worse than usual. All at once I remembered that *you* were at this ball, and I gave myself up to the luxury of thinking of you. Then, sleep was indeed impossible; I grew more and more wakeful, and finally got up and dressed and came over to the Café, below, to continue my reflections more comfortably."

“Not a very practical proceeding for a young man who has to get up so early in the morning as you tell me you have, to make his way in the world.—But how do you happen to be here?”

“I happened to have an invitation sent me, by a patron who thought I would be appreciative. He no doubt meant to eke out with it the smallness of his fee.—I had not really thought of using it, till I heard some men in the Café discussing you.”

“What men could they have been?”

He indicated with his eyes the two just now again approaching. “It was the military one that principally bragged about you and toasted you,” he said.

“Oh, the Lieutenant. Did you ever see more delightfully broad shoulders?”

“No, nor heard half a dozen much broader stories than he told. I would not have believed they could even know you, and now I come here and find them and their like apparently in more favor than anybody else. How can you have any possible patience with such people? What have you been saying to them,

for instance, all this time that I have been looking on? ”

“ I was inculcating upon them your favorite morality, railing at society, scoffing at Anglo-mania and the coaching parade,—I assure you I was. I told them we were flies in amber, not half worthy of our costly environment. Oh, I am a great apostle of your doctrines when you are not by. You should have heard me.”

“ How sorry I am I came ! ” he responded mournfully, as if her graceless levity made the case quite hopeless. “ I have always put you on such a lofty pedestal, you have been to me something sacred and holy. I wanted to come and have a glimpse of you in your own manner of life, to which all my own is so much unlike. I felt that you always chose in it the worthiest part, that most in keeping with yourself, and that no doubt much was forced upon you only by the necessities of your position. And now—ah, these men! these imbeciles ! ” And he broke off abruptly and ground his teeth.

“ *They* do not scold me ; *they* do not say uncomplimentary things,” affecting to pout in a childish way.

"What do they say—if it be worth while asking?" he demanded grimly.

"They tell me a battery is less formidable than my bright eyes, that my mouth is too small to pronounce three-syllable words, that I—"

An open snort of disdain interrupted this trying response, and he was preparing to take his leave.

"Are you never coming to see me any more, at five o'clock tea?" demanded the pretty girl with a half-repentant air; "I really miss you."

Foster Knowlton yielded, upon this, to a new revulsion of feeling. Here he had come thundering, like another John Knox, to destroy the idols of the winsome frivolous queen, and she showed no resentment but even submitted with a sort of meekness.

"Oh, pardon this wild, utterly unwarrantable talk!" he exclaimed. "*I* indeed to find fault with, to say uncomplimentary things to you—whom I revere, before whom I hold my very breath with admiration. You are so beautiful you *must* be good, no matter what you may seem to say, no matter what you may seem to do."

"Ah! you are the worst flatterer of all," she returned with a seraphic smile.

Foster Knowlton was a young landscape-gardener, of the scientific sort. He had come to her father's place at Pelham to supervise some improvements for an important firm of which he was an employé. It happened during one of his visits that Miss Edith Elbridge—thanks to a French heel and a polished oaken floor—had met with a Potts' fracture of the ankle. There was nobody in the house at the time but women-folk, and he was forced to carry her up-stairs to her room. He said to himself that this close contact with her dainty form would do him no good. He did not appreciate it so much in the agitation and sympathy of the moment, but it made his heart beat so continuously with thinking of it afterwards, he feared a chronic affection of that organ.

The acquaintance thus begun went on to warm intimacy. It was confined in a peculiar way to themselves, for Knowlton had little part in her circle. He boldly said amusing and disparaging things of it. She, on her side,

argued with him that he must cultivate the world more, for his own interest. The young landscape-gardener became a half Mentor to her, an uncommon sort of friend, quite outside the usual routine. He fell extremely in love with her, and then, feeling that he had so little to give and so much to gain in such a match, had heroically kept away and seldom saw her.

The visit of this third person, to whom they would never have thought of giving serious attention, had consequences the other two aspirants could little have foreseen. He revived in Miss Elbridge an impatience—often indulged in—with the nonentities and incompetents of her prosperous set, who had everything in the world in their favor and so little to show for it. She could have morally taken them by the throat, like a female Jack Sheppard, and made them disgorge their unused possessions for the benefit of their betters.

She became particularly short with the military man and the society beau. They bored her greatly, and in her anxiety to get rid of them led each of them into a most astonishing mistake.

Applegate Crump had made some disparaging remarks on the military, particularly at the expense of the Lieutenant, who—by reason partly of his great responsibility to his shoulders—was certainly not a dancer of merit.

“I dote upon the army, Mr. Crump,” responded the lady wilfully. “You are wrong in aspersing a body which, being our country’s shield, has too little time, perhaps, for all the petty accomplishments of civil life.”

“You refer to the a—a—the profession, not to any individual, I trust?”

“The profession, decidedly. I refer to heroism, great sieges, battle, murder, and sudden death. *You* are such a languid, conventional sort of person, Mr. Crump.”

“I languid? I—oh, I assure you you should see me at the Stock Exchange. I may be calm on the surface, but underneath I’m a perfect volcano. I am, really.”

“And all for a little more money to spend in the idlest ways. When people have got money enough, why do they not turn to higher things?”

"Oh, I—a—assure you I don't get so *very* much," explained the broker, half paralyzed by this unexpected turn.

He went away full of a new, agitating idea. It suddenly popped into his head that if he were only in another profession he should succeed with her easily. Why did she tolerate that clumsy Lieutenant Sturgeon? Clearly only because he was in the army. She had as good as declared she would never marry but in the army.

"Well, why not?" said Crump. "My uncle, on the maternal side, is Secretary of War, and the thing is feasible enough. And Wall Street has been so dull ever since Garfield's death, the grass is nearly growing there; one is better out of than in it."

Sturgeon, on the other hand, might be described as a volcano on the surface and calm beneath. A habit of falling in love with every pretty face had left him emotions of but little depth and slight possibilities of pain. Nevertheless they were energetic while they lasted, and he was highly in earnest at present.

It was the caprice of Miss Elbridge with

him to look very differently at the army. She celebrated the victories of peace. "It is the age of commerce and the arts," she said. "I can't get over the silliness and wickedness of great strong men cutting one another's throats at this time of day."

"Maybe you'd like me better if I were in some other kind of profession?"

"I know what I don't like, at any rate," she replied, in a non-committal way.

"Something in stocks and the dancing-school line?" suggested the warrior vindictively, catching sight of Crump. "And you wouldn't be a soldier's bride?"

"Oh dear no, not a *soldier's* bride, no, indeed."

There certainly seemed to Sturgeon an enticing stress on the word "soldier's," and a startling thought sprang up in his brain.

"There's an Indian war coming on in which all my family influence may not be able to save me from having to take part," said he. "And there's the danger of Mount Vernon Barracks again. And there's always the dull routine. Suppose I beat my sword into a ploughshare,

my spear into a pruning-hook, and take to civil life?"

He went away ruminating profoundly.

Sturgeon and Crump met at the same club, scowled at each other, looked at each other with glances of veiled meaning, each wrote a multitude of letters, and not long before Decoration Day both were summoned by business, at a slight interval apart, to Washington.

* * * * *

The formal parade of Decoration Day was over. Fifth Avenue and Broadway were free again of the swaying bayonets, the heavy guns, the trim Seventh, the fighting Sixty-ninth, the veterans with their tattered banners, and the wagon-loads of flowers following behind for the decoration of the graves in the cemeteries. Edith Elbridge and Foster Knowlton sat in the parlor of a Norman Shaw mansion on the Avenue, its rich interior, in the latest modern taste, forming a background for two very comely figures.

The girl had a certain gratified sort of look and rosy color: something momentous had evidently just passed. The young man was

utilizing his holiday to photograph some of the house, it appeared, and had stayed to lunch.

A card was now brought in, bearing the inscription, "*Mr. Sturgeon!*"

"*Mr. Sturgeon? Mr. Sturgeon?* I know of no *Mr. Sturgeon*," commented Miss Edith.

Her companion sought the library across the hall, to gather up his photographic traps and leave her free.

It was Lieutenant Sturgeon that followed the servant. He was dressed in a way intended to denote extreme devotion to civil life. He wore snuff-colored clothes; had abandoned the square carriage of his shoulders, and affected a sort of book-keeper stoop or the air of a merchant in feeble health.

"I have prepared a little surprise for you," said he. "I have beaten my sword into a ploughshare, my spear into a pruning-hook. Will you accept the heart and hand of Peter Sturgeon, member of the Stock Exchange?"

"Lieutenant *Sturgeon!*" exclaimed Edith.

"Pardon!—*Mr. Sturgeon*—of the Stock Exchange. Office, No. 11 Wall Street—all orders promptly attended to."

"I don't know what this means, and I'm so disappointed, Lieutenant, not to see you in uniform. I thought all army men made it a point to honor the day."

"Aha, ahem!" carelessly. "Of course, when I was in the army I wore my uniform,—but now it's a very different matter."

"And pray, how long since you left the army?" in strong surprise.

"A week ago I resigned from the Eleventh Cavalry. Yesterday I secured my seat in the Stock Board. Fortunately there was one for sale just at the very moment I wanted it."

The servant brought in a new card.

"I have done this for your sake. I must have a few moments' private talk with you," said Sturgeon, hurriedly—"I cannot see any other visitors in this agitated state," and he slipped through the *portière* into the back parlor.

A well-known figure again appeared. It was Crump,—in military costume, resplendent in brass buttons, a sword by his side, his shoulders rigidly squared, his chest well-thrown out. He moved only from the hips downward, saluted, and struck the position of "stand at ease."

"Ah, Mr. Crump," said Edith, genially. "You at least are doing honor to the day. But this surprise. And you were to be out of town.—I did not know before you were connected with a militia regiment."

"Beg pardon! it is no militia; far from it. May I refer you to my—"

He extended, stiffly, his visiting card, since she had not grasped the detail of the first; she read: "Lieutenant J. Applegate Crump, Eleventh Cavalry."

"What is this masquerade?"

"Masquerade? not at all. It's the card proper to the army; all military men have it."

"And pray how long have you been in the army?" she inquired, bewilderment mingling with her surprise and amusement.

"My commission arrived only late last night, I am sorry to say, or I should have appeared before you earlier. Still, this was the first day on which I could have come in my uniform. How do you like it, by the way?"

He turned about, lifting both arms.

"You are too splendid; one really ought to look at you through smoked glass."

"My uncle, on the maternal side, who is secretary of war, made it all right for me. Fortunately there was a commission vacant in the Eleventh Cavalry just at the right moment. Now that all objections are removed—"

"This is a gross imitation of me, sir!" cried the ex-lieutenant Sturgeon, bursting into the room. "This is a deliberate parody. I call you to account for it."

"Parody, sir? What do you mean, sir?" demanded Crump, fuming equally.

"I changed my profession in life, at the request of this lady—whose wish is my only law. I have enlisted for the victories of peace, put myself in unison—as every sensible person should—with the age of progress, of commerce and the arts. And now you presume to—"

"I call it rather a paltry imitation of *me*," cut in the other. "At the desire of this young lady, I have turned to heroism, great ideas, battle, murder and sudden death, and I shall allow no reflections upon my conduct by *you*, Lieutenant Sturgeon."

"Don't 'lieutenant' me, Mr. Crump! Peter Sturgeon, Civilian, of the Stock Exchange and

No. 11 Wall Street. You will do well not to let the fact escape your attention."

"And don't 'Mr.' me, Peter Sturgeon, Civilian. Recollect, unequivocally, that *I* am *Lieutenant* Crump, of the Eleventh Cavalry!"

"Heavens, the very commission I resigned! Who could have imagined you would get it?"

"And I now recall it was a Sturgeon to whom my seat in the Stock Board was sold. Who would have dreamed that you could have bought it?"

"I can only call this a most extraordinary coincidence, sir," cried Sturgeon, blustering hotly.

"I catch your meaning, sir. It *is* a coincidence; I do not deny it," cried Crump, blustering in return as much as he dared to one of such superior size and strength.

"Gentlemen, do not quarrel, I beg of you: it is not worth while; it is not really," appealed Edith, some alarm mingling with her mirth at their eccentric conduct. "Mr. Knowles, will you come here a moment?"

Knowles entered. She flew to this new-

comer with an air of joyous relief, led him forward by the hand, and said :

“Gentlemen, allow me to present to you my future husband.”

“Do you mean to say—” gasped Sturgeon, in the first instant of wild consternation.

“Do I understand you to mean—” gasped J. Applegate Crump, equally agitated.

“Will you go back on a man who beat his sword into a ploughshare? who gave up the gallant, dashing Eleventh Cavalry to become a member of a one-horse Stock Exchange?”

“Do you mean to say you go back on one who for your sake has become his country’s shield, dismissed the abject pursuit of money-getting and all the petty accomplishments of civil life?”

Foster Knowles took a pace or two forward. He did not speak, but a good deal seemed gathering in his eye.

The two disappointed suitors looked at each other aghast.

“Crump, old man?” suddenly exclaimed Sturgeon.

“Sturgeon, old boy?” responded Crump.

They shook hands in that hasty way as if they did not know exactly what they were doing, and they withdrew in company.

"And I," said the young landscape-gardener to Edith, "who shine neither in the army nor finance and society, and only appear betwixt and between these distinguished claimants—you can overlook all that and still be satisfied with me?"

"Yes, for this once," she replied with a smile of the sweetest indulgence, "but don't let it happen again."

A CHRISTMAS CRIME.

MISS DE GILBERT was a stately-looking girl, in a soft white gown, with a scarf of the same material tied lightly about her shoulders. There was a sort of Marie Antoinette suggestion in her aspect, and also, as it were, the shadow of a brooding sorrow hanging over her.

She was from somewhere or other—we haven't always time in this busy world of ours to find out where everybody is from. There was a general impression that she had lately come back from abroad. She was visiting in town. She was a friend of our hostess, Mrs. Grambold, or had been particularly recommended to her, and that lively young matron had invited her for this dinner. People came rather late; and Mrs. Grambold—busy with about a hundred things at once, as was her usual

custom, was not able to tell much about this guest in advance, either.

Mr. Grassletree, who took Miss de Gilbert in, was particularly impressed by her. Indeed, he induced the hostess to change the arrangement already made, and give her to him. Towards him, on the contrary, she showed as much asperity as politeness permitted. If he drew from her an occasional rare pale smile, it was only by the exertion of his utmost powers of entertaining.

Who was Mr. Grassletree? Oh, Grassletree was a kind of law unto himself. He was one of those persons such as we meet with in our journeys about the Club end of town. In short, Grassletree was Grassletree.

It was Christmas Eve. After dinner a couple of standard young banjo players of North America gave some selections, Miss Amy Goboy, of the Amateur Comedy Company, recited a sweet thing or two, and then we settled down upon the floor to tell ghost stories. We spread out a lot of cushions comfortably all around, and in the midst set a large tin pan, containing a plate in which

burned a mixture of salt and alcohol. This cast a pale flickering light over all the faces and gave the proper weird and ghastly effect. In spite of this, however, the ghost stories rather languished.

Mr. Grassletree now all at once drew a heavy sigh—keeping Miss Ernestine de Gilbert, it might be noted, well under observation.

“Speaking of Christmas presents,” said he—when nobody at all had been speaking of Christmas presents—“speaking of Christmas presents, fellow-sufferers, I’d like to submit a case to you.”

“Anything up to a packing-case; now is your time; there are stockings here that will hold it.”

“Speak for yourself, Mr. Chinkerton,” said Mrs. Grambold.

“I thought it more magnanimous to speak for Miss Goboy or Miss Ten Stroke.”

Both those young ladies uttered shrill exclamations of protest and resentment at this audacity.

“Now suppose a man had bought a present for another man, and then yielded to the temp-

tation of keeping it himself?" went on Grassletree.

"Mr. Grassletree has yielded to a temptation. I'm not surprised at it at all. I think him quite capable of it," said Elsie Ten Stroke.

"Tell us all about it!" clamored the company.

"Well, it's like this. You see before you one who, whom—which—but let it pass! Despise me if you will, but hear me. I know not why I speak to you of this now, but probably because there comes to every conscience-burdened criminal a moment when all considerations of prudence must be laid aside."

"Oh, indeed!" said Mrs. Grambold, and she vivaciously threw at him a small sofa pillow that made a convenient missile.

"I bought the nicest thing I could think of as a Christmas present for a friend, and then couldn't bear to give it him. I robbed him, as it were,"—he bowed his head, as in gloomy remorse, upon his hand, "and I could never look him in the face again."

"It was only between you and yourself, wasn't it?" asked Amy Goboy. "He never

knew it, and besides a person has a right to change his mind."

"No that was the worst of it: there was glaring testimony and proof. Witnesses could be produced to show that I had actually bought it for him."

"Well, it could be easily explained, and I suppose nothing came of it?"

"My dear friend was ruined, and the article I had proposed to give him would have saved him, that's all. I am the cause of all his calamities."

"Will you stop your circumlocutions, and go on?" demanded Mrs. Grambold, peremptorily.

"I used to see the article in the show-window, day after day, as I passed by. I thought I could get it at any time, and so was in no hurry. 'It's the very thing for old Fred,' I used to say to myself and the others. 'It will suit him to a "t"'. Old Fred shall have it as sure as my name is Sam Grassletree.' One day it was missing and I had a regular panic; but I found it had only been taken out of the window to be shined up a bit. That decided me; I

bought it at once. Some poor devil of a mechanic had got it up for himself originally, and it was the only one of the kind. There never was a thing more exactly adapted to Fred's case."

At the name of Fred, Miss de Gilbert, who had sat hitherto in dignified silence, had visibly started, and she began to pay close attention.

"What was it?" demanded a chorus of voices.

"It was a most ingenious invention.—I returned to America with it about three weeks afterwards."

"Do you want to drive us mad?—'article,' 'thing,' 'invention,'—what was it?"

"What was it? It was an *antol-aphobo-takis-taferon*; that's what it was."

"Is that all of it?"

"Do you get a commission?"

"Shall we leave orders for it at the grocer's, the stationer's, or the blacksmith's?"

"Tell us instantly what you mean, and cease this aggravating conduct."

"That's a part of it.—It was a musical-early-rising-without-alarm clock."

"Oh, indeed! only an alarm clock?"

"No, a *without*-alarm clock. Instead of springing at you in a ferocious way, as those clocks usually do, like a kind of moral rattlesnake, it began gently, soothingly, with soft mellifluous notes, and gradually increased the pressure, till you were thrilled all over with an idea of the grandeur and glory of getting up to breakfast, and going about your day's work. I tell you what, when you had once known the antolaphobotakistaferon, it was invaluable. But, at first, I had hesitated between that and a *thlao-pil-akoustikon*."

"Is that all of it, and would your friend have liked that too?"

"He was an amateur of all curious contrivances, and I'm sure he would."

"What was that curious contrivance?"

"Oh, that was a combined crush hat and acoustic fan. You could use it at the opera, you know, or a concert, for bringing the sounds nearer. And it might serve to fill up a gap in the conversation now and then."

"Or a gap in one's information."

"Even this would have saved him from much

of the misery into which he fell. Ah! I was Fred Bradstock's worst enemy. Imagine the feelings with which I first met him after thus purloining his property."

Miss Ernestine de Gilbert started now indeed; one would say she had some peculiar interest in this name.

Mrs. Grambold endeavored, in the dark, to kick the narrator warningly with her small foot, but did not succeed in reaching him.

"If it's Fred Bradstock you mean," here put in her husband, "you are not troubled with confronting him very much of late. He's been at the Antipodes, or somewhere near it, for I don't know how long. He's in the Bermudas now, I believe, with a yachting party."

"Happily for me, yes," assented the narrator, with a new access of mournfulness. What I tell you of happened a good while ago. We are judged by our intentions, and I felt guilty before him, even from the first, though I little suspected then what genuine cause I was going to have for it."

A gasp merging into a disdainful sniff, or a

disdainful sniff merging into a gasp, came from the direction of Miss de Gilbert.

"The worst burden on me was the witnesses, who had known of my intentions. They all returned to this country at once. I had to be a whole corps of detectives in myself to keep them and Fred apart. I paid the fare of one of them to Florida, got another away on some plausible pretext to Montreal, and let the third into such a good thing in an interest of mine in a Montana stock ranch, that he couldn't possibly refuse to go there.

"Why not confess,—if you felt so badly about it, as you say?"

"You do not know the *antol-aphobo*—the—persuader, when you talk like that. Will you believe that I, inheriting a nervous temperament, and almost constitutionally incapable of sleeping after seven in the morning, actually cultivated the habit of taking opiates, to enjoy as much as possible the delightful sensation of being waked up by the *antol-aphabo-takistaferon*."

"Are all your long names strictly necessary?" demanded Miss Amy Goboy, suspic-

iously, "are they really the names of the things?"

"They strike me as very good names for the things, and I give them for what they are worth.—You see the case of Fred was peculiar. On the one hand, he had some heart trouble, and couldn't be called by any of the existing alarm clocks, because the rattling metallic things might have scared him into an untimely grave. On the other hand, he needed *some* assistance, for he could not be depended upon to wake up on his own account.—Out of these conditions developed the possibility for evil in my duplicity, in all its glaring horror."

Charlie Chinkerton, a versatile genius, had placed himself at the piano and was playing a slow accompaniment to the narrative. At the last words he struck two or three chords of heavily ominous import.

"I began to trace constantly in Fred's record the baneful influence of my theft. There was the case, for instance, where he lost the grizzly, in California. His guide inadvertently failed to call him, and the hunt was up and away three hours before he put in an

appearance.—It was a stuffed grizzly, it is true, but if he had been there he would have known it and saved the reputation of the party, for he had been taken in once with a stuffed deer, in the Adirondacks.”

“Grassletree, you are up to something in all this,” said our hostess; “I don’t know what it is, but I think I ought to throw another sofa-cushion at you.”

And she proceeded to do so.

“You are too good,” said the story-teller, easily catching this ineffective missile. Then he continued:

“The *antol*—the musical-early-rising-without alarm—persuader would have saved him from being left by the steam-launch at the ocean yacht race; it would have saved him from being left at the great Rockaway steeple-chases; and, again, it would have saved him from being late at his broker’s office, the day that K. G. & Q. stock jumped up twenty points in an hour. I need not go over the list of all the other appointments, whether of business or pleasure, he disastrously missed, through the same cause. But the really

tragic episode was the breaking off of his engagement."

Chinkerton here struck a most discordant crash upon the keys.

"This is really too much!" exclaimed the hostess—whether she meant Chinkerton at the piano or some other circumstance.

Miss de Gilbert, who had shown signs of extreme restlessness, for some time past, attempted to rise from the improvised divan. It was not so easy a matter, however, in the toilette of the day, and before she had progressed far, Grassletree, continuing imperturbably but more rapidly, had said:

"They say the girl he was engaged to was a perfect fascinator, just too pretty for anything. She was from somewhere out of town, Spuyten Duyvil, Yonkers, Baltimore, or something that way. She was rich."

A scoff of indignation from Miss de Gilbert, engaged in her efforts to get up.

"Beautiful, refined, accomplished, most charming in every way. She was, as I have been told, all that the most ardent fancy could paint, and I—I—you conceive the bitterness

of this avowal—was the sole cause of the breaking of that engagement.”

Miss de Gilbert settled back with a sigh upon her cushions. Mrs. Grambold telegraphed her reassuringly with eyes and lips :

“*He* does not *know*. I have not told *anybody*.”

It was apparent that Grassletree could not be stopped. One thing was certain, that he held the attention of the company—particularly that of its most perverse member—very fixedly.

“The union of those two admirable persons, exactly suited to each other, was prevented by the *antolapho*—the musical-early-rising producer. Once more poor Fred was missing at the critical moment.”

“The wedding?”

“No, but almost the next thing to it. His *fiancée’s* heart had been set on having him appear at a certain dinner—to meet her relatives and so on. He did not appear, and she threw him over, and that was the end of it all. But it was only the fault of not having the missing machine, and not his own in the

least. I'll tell you all about it. One of the peculiarities of Miss—er—of his affianced—a part of her charm, showing force and real character, was that she was implacable, unchanging as the laws of the Medes and Persians. It is a delicate matter to touch upon, and I don't pretend to fathom the subtle mysteries of the female heart, but I have somehow gathered that there was another girl at the dinner, who flattered herself she might have been a successful rival for Fred's affections, and it was thought he did not want to see her so publicly. Of course, it is amply demonstrated that there was nothing in this, if only by the fact that Fred has never set eyes upon that one since."

"But will *you* tell us what a musical alarm-clock can have had to do with his being late at dinner? You don't want us to believe he slept all day, I suppose?"

"It was in Philadelphia—now I think of it, it was in Philadelphia. They dine there in the middle of the day; for all I know, it was twelve o'clock, sharp."

"But even if it was, considering the occasion

and that he was visiting there expressly on her account, he might have managed to get up by noon at least once in his life."

"Oh, he did, he did! I happen to know that he did a lot of things that day, bright and early. He went out to Bryn Mawr, and attended the City Troop Races. He was on the jump from morning till night."

"But then, self-contradictory person," cried Mrs. Grambold, "what are you telling us? Why could he not have gone to the dinner as well as elsewhere?"

"He mistook the day, you know, that's the point; he thought it was another day."

"But, in the name of long-suffering patience, what had your wretched alarm-clock to do with his mistaking the day?"

"Oh, don't speak of it in that way," he protested tenderly.

"Well, your absurd alarm-clock, then?"

"Pardon me, not an alarm-clock; it was a without-alarm clock. It was a musical-early-rising—"

"But what had that to do with his mistaking the day?"

‘Oh, yes; it had a calendar attachment; didn’t I tell you about that?—or did I only mention its self-lighting candle? If he had seen the calendar, you know, if he had seen that index hand come round slowly, but inexorably, pointing out your Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, no such dreadful error could ever have arisen.’

With this, the company began to break up. While the preparations for departure were going on, Mr. Grassletree and Miss Ernestine de Gilbert gravitated together, casually, as it were, and drew a little apart.

“How did you know who I was?” asked the lady, with a languid, proud way of poisoning her head.

“From the description. Yours were the eyes, the hair, a certain stately carriage, I had heard of, from Fred, too often to be forgotten. There was a particular charming dimple near the left corner of the mouth—”

“That will do on that score.”

“When I discovered you here, I induced Mrs. Grambold, by special request, to let me take you in.”

"Did you, indeed! I half suspected it. Well, I knew you, too. You were one of his dissolute companions."

"Ha, ha!" laughed her auditor—with only a rather hollow sort of mirth, however.

"Tell me," she continued, "was there a single word of truth in all your ridiculous story?"

"I really mean that there is—that there was, about such a clock. And I really mean that Fred adores the very ground you walk on. He is one of the most wretched men in two hemispheres without you."

"There, that will do, also. Were you serious when you said that his health was not good, that he was disposed to heart disease?"

"Oho!" reflected Grassletree, "so the wind lies in that quarter? She takes a little interest, after all."

"I honestly think his heart is in no danger," he said aloud, "except in so far as it may be affected by his sufferings on your account."

"But you have given him such an absurd, stupid character. He is not the indolent person you represent him to be. He occupies

himself in a great many useful ways besides in his sports. Go back and say something that will set those people right about him."

"It would hardly be necessary. I fear those people are already in the habit of taking Samuel Grassletree's utterances with some grains of salt."

"Then what *does* this all mean?" she asked, infinitely puzzled.

"That 'I would give half I possess,' as the novelists say, to bring you and my old young friend, Frederick Bradstock, together again. If, in the mean time, nothing has happened to prevent it, why can it not be done? May I venture to ask—with infinite respect—whether anything has happened on your side?"

"No," she replied diffidently, "nothing."

"Then, as between two sensible and well-disposed human beings, frankly, why can it not be done?"

"No, no, it can not be done. I will not hear of it, on any account.—The fact is, he did not *want* to go to that dinner from the first, and I had to try and make him. I knew I must put my foot down in the beginning.

Now tell me the *real* reason why he stayed away."

"I am sure you do not really think old Fred would get up false ones to account for it," expostulated his friend Grassletree.

"He has never given any, except that he forgot the day."

"Why not accept that one, then, by way of a little variety? It's gospel truth, I assure you. Fred was in a strange town; he had a lot of things to do, and he's always something of a dreamer, you know. Bless you, what's the harm in a little absent-mindedness? The greatest men have been troubled that way. Look at me: I left my best umbrella in the omnibus this very morning! All Fred Bradstock needs, my dear Miss de Gilbert, is an accomplished wife. With just the right kind of wife, to infuse her own method and precision, into—shall we say his madness?—he'd be a model of models in every particular."

"I dare say," rejoined his hearer, dryly. "Let us hope he may get such a one."

"I have seen him knock his head against the wall, on account of his conduct, a dozen

times. 'It was so uncomplimentary to her,' he says, 'it can't be explained. She treated me just as I deserved; she couldn't have done otherwise.'

"Of course I could not," assented Ernestine de Gilbert, "but," flushing very much and almost tearful, "why didn't *he* do something further? He might have persisted; he might have kept on trying to explain."

"As I understand it, you would not see him, and poor Fred was never glib with his pen. If I am right, also, you returned some of his letters unopened. Am I right?"

She lowered her head a trifle, as if in haughty admission that this was so. But, somehow, the shadow of a brooding sorrow did not seem to hang over Miss de Gilbert half as much now as formerly.

"Fred got it into his head, at last, that you were glad the match was off, and that you liked some one else better. On this wrong tack—as we now see it was—he tried to brace up by devoting himself to other women, but it was all no go. I happened to see it for myself, and I tell you, there's not an unhappier man in

Christendom to-day than that same Fred Bradstock."

"You *must* go *at once*, and say something before all those people to set him right," exclaimed his hearer, a little irrelevantly.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" thereupon began Grassletree, advancing in a sort of professional way. "Ladies and gentlemen of the company! I wish to say that while driven by a reckless despair to ease an overburdened conscience, I may at the same time have seemed to depreciate another person. Let me say that Fred Bradstock is no inmate of the Castle of Indolence, and that—while all the claims of the *antol-aphobo-takistaferon* remain as represented—anybody has got to get up very early in the morning, indeed, to catch him napping. I seem to feel, too, a certain prophetic sense that the end of his troubles may be near. I would withdraw no essential statement, but I suggest that all that part of the allegations relating to Frederick Bradstock be stricken out, or construed only in that Pickwickian sense so proper to this genial East Thirty-fourth Street observance at this hospitable Christmas home,—

that is, this home-like Christmas occasion, at this observant,—In short, I am thoroughly convinced that, so far from needing adventurous aids, the more persons you sent to waken Frederick Bradstock, the sounder he would sleep; whereas, the fewer and the less—”

“*Don't* make it worse,” hastily whispered a voice at his sleeve.

And the next moment she began hesitatingly, “Of course, if you say Fred is really sorry—”

In the very next mail there went to the Bermudas a letter, in which Frederick Bradstock was assured that the chances of winning back his old sweetheart were now most promising.

“I told them all, after dinner,” the letter concluded, “a wild tale of a without-alarm clock I had meant to give you. By hook and by crook I've fixed it all up with her, and it's rather a handsome piece of work on my part. By the way, that clock isn't a bad one; I'll send you the maker's name. I dare say they are in the market by this time.—Miss de Gil-

bert's yours, my boy. Come home and take her and the blessing of

“SAMUEL GRASSLETREE.”

At the very earliest moment, too, returned an answer from the Bermudas.

“I’m coming home—” “Of course he is, lucky young dog! Why shouldn’t he? Of course he is—” interpolated Grassletree, complacently. “I’m—I’m—” “bless me, what’s this? What’s this?” “I’m on my wedding trip. Married to a lovely girl I met in the Islands. Affair been on some time, but you’ve been so deuced off these last few years, no chance to tell you about it. Comparisons are odorous, but the de Gilbert—well, the fact is, the de Gilbert was a little inclined to be domineering. Excuse short letter. Tell you all about it when we meet.”

Samuel Grassletree was not an accomplished whistler, but, on this occasion, he whistled. For an instant he raised his hand against the without-alarm clock, as if to do it violent injury; but instead of yielding to this impulse, he took it down from the modest place it had occupied

in his bedroom, and placed it boldly on the most conspicuous wall of his apartment.

After that, he sat down and reflected on the divers characters of the persons who had heard his story on Christmas Eve, and particularly on certain positive traits in Miss de Gilbert.

He began to think he would take another European trip.

A DOMESTIC MENAGERIE.

A CANARY-BIRD, by the name of "Trill," resided in a gilt wire cage in the window of a dining-room facing north. I can not say whether the bird had any other name or not. If he had, of course it would have been Barclay. Perhaps it would have been Trill W. Barclay, or Trill Alexander Barclay, or something of that kind. At any rate, he belonged to the Barclays, and was only being taken care of temporarily by friends of theirs during the absence of the Barclays in Europe.

This was a handsomely-furnished dining-room, and pleasant enough, when a good fire burned in the grate and not too much was expected from the weather without. At the same time, it must have been rather discouraging to a bird thus thrown upon his own resources, as it were, to have to sing in a window

opening to the north, where the sun never came in. If you ask why he was not hung in some other room then, I can not exactly tell you, but no doubt there were good reasons. For one thing the people couldn't help the way their house faced, could they? What is certain is, that it was found most convenient to hang the cage there on its first arrival, and there it continued to remain.

The people in whose charge the bird was thus placed were a young couple, not long married. The house, of the "English basement" pattern, was given the bride by her father as a wedding-present. The pair were persons who perhaps did not care so very much for birds. A slight coolness arising from this cause may have combined with the unfamiliar surroundings to increase the natural reserve of Trill, and detract from the excellence of his music. The apparent mediocrity of his talent, as thus influenced, again, may have added somewhat further to his new guardians' lack of interest.

A certain "Peter" brought Trill down from the Barclays' when they went away, put up a

hook in the top of the window, and suspended the cage to it by a brass chain. This Peter was a peculiar old man of German or Scandinavian extraction—who claimed to have been once a sailor. He had his quarters in a poor basement, on the door of which he had put a home-made sign running about as follows:

TAKING CARE of FURNISSES, CArYing in Cole
AND going OUT By dAys woRk doNE HERe.

He had come round at first as a mere beggar. The lady of the house had charitably given him clothes and food, then trusted him with odd jobs, such as shaking carpets and cleaning up the cellar, and had found him a good, honest, well-meaning man, broken down by misfortunes. She had by degrees given him the regular occupation of looking after the furnace and carrying coal to the upper stories, to relieve a servant who grumbled a great deal too much over these things. He had managed to secure more work of the same sort elsewhere, and had ended, as we have seen, by making a profession of it.

The family consisted of the young couple, whom we may designate here as the Man and the Lady, with two servants, a cook and a chambermaid.

The Man, when at leisure in the dining-room, would often bestow very particular attention upon a small collection of rare ceramics he had there, on some bracket shelves in a corner. Trill's cage almost touched it, yet the Man took no more notice of it or him on these occasions than if he did not exist.

"A bird might be in Jericho, for all he cares," I wish it to be supposed that Trill reflected. The Man indeed? not he. He would caressingly flick off a speck of imperceptible dust from a blue plate of the willow pattern, give an affectionate pat to a Flemish pitcher or a German beer-mug, change a Quimper mustard-pot for a Sevres cup and saucer, or set a Chinese jar with raised figures in mosaic where one of Italian majolica had been before; and then he would stand back with half-closed eyes and stare at the whole effect with keen enjoyment.

"What does he get so much pleasure out

of?" let us suppose Trill still to reflect. "Is it that pinky-faced girl in a crimson gown, on the plate which forms the apex of the pyramid? Most likely it's she. She sits down, does she? Her hair is ebony black, her eyes are made with two whisks of a brush. Not to speak of beauty—she hasn't even an intelligent look. She's highly insipid, if I know any thing about it. That style of dress, too, may be all very well for those who like it, but it's certainly no triumph of taste."

One day a fashionable little old lady came into the room and, adjusting her eye-glass upon that particular specimen, exclaimed to the Man:

"That plate is three hundred years old at *least*. That is the real. Oh, it is, you know; it is. You can tell it by the cracks and everything."

The Man began to say something as if in protest, but the little old lady was hard of hearing, or else she had a way of walking right over whatever he said, for she went on:

"It's immensely valuable; *immensely*! Oh, I am a *great* judge of such things."

Upon this the man desisted. Either he could not make her listen, or may have thought it a pity, since the fashionable little old lady was such a great judge of such things, to say anything to the contrary.

Now Trill may have meditated once more as to this—and then again, of course, he may not, “Ah, three hundred years old, is she? and I am but two and a half at most. Why should I expect to be noticed?”

The next day, when the Lady was cleaning the cage and putting in fresh water and seed as usual—for, out of consideration to the Barclays, she preferred to do this service herself instead of leaving it to the maid—the Man, quite in keeping with his crabbedness from the first, took occasion to remark:

“It seems to me that cage gives you a great lot of trouble. When are those Barclays of yours coming back, to take it off your hands?”

The Lady, who was a far more amiable person, as anybody could see—and probably much too good for such a man—replied that she really did not mind it. The Barclays, she thought, would return in the spring.

"When little old Mrs. Methusaleh, your aunt, was here waiting for you, yesterday," said the man, for so the talk went on, "she declared that cheap Italian plate of mine at least three hundred years old, and immensely valuable. You remember my buying it last year at the pottery in Vicenza—a common little bit, with some decorative effect but really no value whatever. What an idiot she is! If that's the reputation a plate is going to get by being smashed into a hundred pieces, perhaps we'd better smash them all. However, that mustn't be smashed any more, though I found it a little topply only yesterday. It's such a soft ware that another fall would be the end of it, and then good-by, my sweetheart of Vicenza!"

"Sweetheart of Vicenza?—'Common little bit,' I should say so. And this is the sort of thing, forsooth, a bird is sacrificed to! Oh, very well!"

Another irritating circumstance on the part of the family—of the Man especially—was the interest taken in a certain Scotch terrier, named Osman Pasha. To prefer an object like that, again, to a canary, indicated some extreme

perversity of nature. The terrier had no shape at all, and his frowsy hair overhung his small eyes in such a way that you couldn't tell one end of him from the other. Still, whoever could like a soft ware "Vicenza sweetheart," in a brick-red costume, was no doubt capable of liking an Osman Pasha, or any other monstrosity, for that matter.

This Osman Pasha had two pronounced eccentricities. In the first place, he had a chronic aversion to being washed. Notwithstanding that the process was performed upon him regularly every few days, familiarity never reconciled him to it. The bare mention of it would cause him to prick up his ears in alarm and try to beat a retreat. If the purpose were seriously entertained, if he were commanded, for instance: "Come here, Osman, it is time to be washed! come, sir, you're going to be washed!" then indeed would he retire in earnest, beginning in a cringing way, casting back furtive glances over his shoulder. If actually seized, he would set up expostulatory yelps that were only smothered in the tub itself.

In the second place, Osman Pasha had a

mortal dread of—a baby. This may have been either the result of teasing by thoughtless infants, or one of those natural antipathies of which so many instances are related in history. Thus several distinguished personages have fainted at a certain perfume; Jagellan, king of Poland, could not abide apples; Marshal Saxe was afraid of cats; Erasmus of fish; and Vangheim, the grand-huntsman of Hanover, of a roast pig. Osman Pasha would rush out into the hall at the ring of the door-bell, bark even at the tallest and stoutest men, and return, wagging his tail with satisfaction. But if the puniest babe in arms appeared, he was stricken with abject fear, and sought the most obscure refuge he could find. If he could climb into the open drawer of a bureau or dresser, nothing suited him better, and he was often found there long afterwards, coiled up and fast asleep. However we may explain these idiosyncracies, the fact was as I tell it.

Otherwise Osman Pasha was a dog fond of having his back scratched, would roll over for the process to be repeated upon his stomach, waving his paws in the air; then he would leap

up and frantically lick your face, tear about the room, and come back and lie down on the rug to sleep. He did not go to sleep all at once either, but would often blink benevolently around, and even when his eyes had been shut for a time would acknowledge casual references to himself such as, "Nice old Osman Wosman, was he sleepy?" by appreciative wags of his tail.

The situation being thus, a number of remarkable series of events took place in the dining-room, one day towards the end of March.

The Man went to his shelves of pottery specimens, as usual. He was adding some small new article of this Longwy faïence that has been so much talked of, of late. While so occupied, he became aware, just at his ear, of a series of sweet, ingratiating chirps. He felt sure that on looking around he should find the bird aiming to make his better acquaintance.

"Pe-e-eep!—tr-r-r—che-e-eep!" chirped Trill.

But when the Man really turned round to look he was astonished instead to find the case quite otherwise. Trill had assumed a most belligerent and threatening demeanor. He had swelled

out his round little breast, extended his wings widely, and opened his mouth to such an extent that scarcely anything was visible but this yawning chasm.

"Hallo!" said the Man, amused, "is that you? Don't eat a fellow up all at once; don't now, really!"

But Trill only advanced further on his perch, and seemed to say: "Oh, yes, I will indeed. Nothing shall stop me. I am going to do it right now."

The Man laughed, and even called the Lady from the reception-room to see how the bird was acting. Trill did not abate his ferocity, but had an air of meaning:

"I have stood this thing about long enough. You can see how you like it yourself. I am a very much provoked bird, and when I am mad, you can take the consequences."

Later, the same morning, when the Lady was coming along towards the dining-room again, in slippers, her steps falling noiselessly on the thick hall carpet, she paused to witness a most singular spectacle transacting within. She murmured, in a tone of suppressed excitement:

“My good gracious me! Who ever heard of such a thing?”

She went back on tiptoe, placing a finger on her lips, summoned the Man, and they returned together. A mouse had clambered up the curtains and let himself down by the brass chain to Trill's cage, and there he was munching away for dear life at the canary-seed in the cups.

Trill's manner now was neither blustering nor terrified. It was a compound of distant respect and curiosity. He drew nearer and nearer to his unceremonious visitor, and finally pecked some seeds out of the dish beside him. By degrees, however, his curiosity seemed to give place to solicitude, for which there was reason enough. The mouse, by no means contented with a dainty peck now and then in bird-fashion, was nibble-nibble-nibbling away without a second's intermission, and what would remain for Trill's share presently wouldn't be worth mentioning.

The observers held their breaths to see what Trill would do, but all at once was heard the loud bang of the spring-door at the foot of the

basement-stairs, shutting in its usual sudden way. At this alarm, the mouse disappeared in a twinkling, Trill flew excitedly round his cage, Osman Pacha woke up from a nap on the rug and made a random dart or two, as with a vague impression of having missed something particularly good. Peter hove in sight from the stairs, bearing two heavy scuttles of coal, and breathing hard.

"Peter, how *could* you?" cried the Young Lady, stamping her foot as his grimy head appeared. "There was a *mouse* in Trill's cage, and we were just going to see what it would do."

"God bless all good souls, ma'am," Peter responded. He had a great habit of mumbling to himself. Not being a person of sufficient importance to secure other listeners, as it may be supposed, he made the most of the one he had. He seemed religious, and whatever he said audibly consisted of pious ejaculations. A turning-point in Peter's career, again, was that some man "had not done as he agreed," and of this also he spoke. Who the man was, why he had not done as he had agreed, and what he

had agreed to do that he had not done, will now probably never be ascertained.

“Did you ever hear of such a thing in all your born days, Peter?” the Lady exclaimed again.

“In Chicago, ma’m, sailin’ the lakes,—’n’ he says, ’n’ I says,—’n’ a fowl—” mumbled Peter.

“Was it a canary bird?”

“It was a colt, ma’am,—one o’ them chunky-built ones, so I believe.”

Upon this the old man moved on, without resentment at the short way he had been snapped up; and his heavy step and stertorous breathing were heard on the parlor floor, and then that above, as he toiled upward with his burdens.

This might be supposed sensation enough in the house for one day, but, on the contrary, the excitement was only just beginning.

The man went up to his study, where he had some important matter to occupy him. The Lady put on an ornamental apron and took down Trill’s cage to repair the devastations of the gormandizing mouse. She removed the lower or floor-part for this purpose, and set

the cage proper, containing the bird, on the table. She talked to Trill while thus engaged, and asked him what he thought of the mouse, whether it ought not to have been ashamed to come unasked and eat up all his provisions, and many similar questions; to all of which Trill made no reply, but sat with his head on one side, as if lost in profound meditation at the incident.

Going away a few steps and turning her back, the Lady looked around just in time to see Trill beat strongly against the small door of his cage. It had become unfastened, and, before she could prevent it, he flew out and up to the ceiling. She was frightened to death. There was the grate, with a blazing coal fire in it, for one source of imminent peril. Another was Osman Pasha, who followed the movements of the bird with his eyes, and then began to tear around the room in pursuit of him like mad. Having lost one good thing to-day, he was by no means disposed to lose another.—And who could say how many more perils yet there might not be in store for Trill?

“Oh! what shall I do?” moaned the Lady,

clasping her hands. "How can I ever look the Barclays in the face? Oh, that I should have let it happen again."

The last expression was a little indefinite. It did not mean that the bird had escaped before. It meant that he had once suffered severely from a cold, ceased even to twitter, stayed in the wet sand at the bottom of his cage, and kept opening his mouth with a gaping movement. He had been too weak even to sit upon his perch, but had fallen off when he attempted to reach it. They had sent him on that occasion to a bird-fancier's, on Sixth Avenue, where board and medical attendance cost forty cents a week, and, instead of dying on their hands as they expected, he had been restored to health. To think that, having come through such a trial, he should now be reserved for this!

The Lady flew to the door and screamed to Peter. She hardly dared to call the Young Man again; he had been interrupted quite enough to-day, and he cared little for Trill at best. Besides, it was doubtful if, in his closed room, he could hear. Then the lady flew to

the dumb-waiter and screamed to Johanna McKenna, the cook, in the kitchen. These two responded as soon as convenient, prepared to lend their assistance.

The campaign for the re-capture of the fugitive, under these auspices, was not of the most brilliant kind. Johanna armed herself with a broom. Peter made rheumatic dives at the bird with one of his coal-scuttles, grasped in both hands. The Lady, for her part, now abandoned herself hopelessly to lamentation, now held out the cage alluringly to Trill, and now made ineffectual attempts to stop Osman Pasha. Osman Pasha grew every moment more transported with enthusiasm and beyond the control of ordinary motives. In vain the Lady clapped her hands imperiously and cried :

“Come and be washed! Osman Pasha, do you hear what I say? Come and be washed this *instant*, sir!”

Round and round he went all the same. He jumped over her head when she stooped to catch him; he even tried in his zeal to scramble up the walls; and a number of times the bird only escaped his jaws by actual miracles.

The door-bell rang in the midst of it all, but no one in the dining-room had leisure to answer it. Trill followed the cornice of the room, poised upon the picture-frames, the door-casings, the chandelier, and the silverware on the side-board. There his golden body made a decorative effect which might have been worth the attention of a jeweler. He dashed among the ornaments on the mantel-piece, and it was a mercy he was not shriveled up in the fire before you could say Jack Robinson.

The Man now suddenly appeared at the door, with a telegraph messenger behind him.

"I should like to know if there is nobody to answer the bell any more?" he said. "It made such a din I had to come down myself.—Here's a telegram saying the Barclays have just arrived and will send for their bird to-morrow."

At this the Lady sat down and began to cry.

"Hal-lo!" said the Man; "what's up? what's going on here?"

Then, taking in the situation, he joined actively in the pursuit. He stationed the Lady in front of the fire, with directions to spread her skirts out, so as to act as a screen, since

the blower—as must needs happen when most desperately wanted—could nowhere be found. A happy inspiration for circumventing Osman Pasha next occurred to him. It happened that a baby was visiting the house, and was up-stairs with its nurse at that very time.

“Bring the baby! Bring the baby!” he commanded, with great presence of mind.

“Oh, *yes*, bring the baby! bring the baby! Johanna, *run!*” screamed the Lady.

The baby was brought forthwith. So terrible in its might did it prove that Osman Pasha was checked even in the midst of his wild career. He slunk away, and hid his head, ostrich-fashion, under a waist-pattern, fallen out of an overturned work-basket. There he was captured, and he was eliminated from the scene as one of the sources of danger.

The Man now undertook the chase upon logical principles. He waved Trill into corners, first with a palm-leaf fan, then with a long feather-duster, and had a step-ladder carried around behind him to mount upon at the proper moment. But time after time Trill eluded his grasp. The man began to wear a heated expres-

sion. The lady followed him anxiously around and held up the margin of her apron as if to throw it over a bird fourteen feet up in the air. Peter continued his occasional dives with the coal-scuttle, and Johanna McKenna had secured a pair of tongs.

Poor Trill, frightened by the hue and cry, made such desperate efforts to escape that he seemed likely to do himself an injury. It was pitiful to see his agitation and uncertainty. More than once he threw himself violently against the walls, as if determined to seek the Canary Islands and the road to freedom by the most direct way possible, and he seemed to find it singular he was so withstood.

"Oh, if he were only *mine*!" bewailed the Lady, "I should not care so much. Oh, what *will* the Barclays say to me? And they are to send for him to-morrow!"

Trill began to show signs of exhaustion. He rested wearily upon a photograph of the Bridge of Mount Blanc and the Island of Jean Jacques Rousseau, but was soon off again to the cabinet of ceramic specimens. He poised upon the topmost plate, the portrait of the Vicenza girl

in the crimson dress, fluttered up again, attempted to regain it, and slipped down out of sight, as in a nest, into a small triangular space behind, between the plate and the walls.

Now, if ever, is the Man's opportunity. He approaches noiselessly with his step-ladder. He mounts. He throws his handkerchief over the top of the enclosing space. Oh! be joyful! Trill is imprisoned below. He has but to reach down and take the wonder into custody. The man reached down, through the enveloping handkerchief—*Care-ful-ly*—C-AUTIOUSLY—

Oof!!! Poof!!!!

The man is so startled that he tumbles to the floor, his neck all but dislocated. The bird, uttering a plaintive little cry, had struggled up again with unsuspected vigor, and once more escaped from his very hands.

The step-ladder falls with the Man. Down comes too the crimson lady with her ebon hair and eyes like sloes, and is smashed to flinders. At least a hundred other pieces are now added to the original hundred.

But no sooner was the Vicenza sweetheart

laid low than Trill, whether repentant for the trouble he had caused or simply rejoicing in his victory, flew of his own accord to his cage, placed himself on his perch, and began such a caroling as it was a delight to hear. It was melody that the severest stoic could not have refused to listen to, and was poured forth in rapturous floods. The man suffered himself to be attracted by it even under all his sense of discomfiture and loss.

"I do believe the little rascal did it on purpose," he declared.

This warbling continued at short intervals all day long. It was both remarkable in itself and because they had never before heard Trill sing with any freedom. His manner also changed; instead of ruffling with indignation at the Man he would now hop from bottom to top of his cage with pleasure, and always break out into music.

"Either the unusual exercise of his tour around the room did him good," said the Man—"and if he were going to stay we should give him a good deal more of that—or he distinctly and with malice aforethought intended to get

rid of that plate and draw attention to himself. I will wager the latter is so."

In the sequel, although the Barclays had returned, they did not send for Trill next day, as they had proposed. They went off for a visit elsewhere, before settling down; then the summer vacation came on; and so, in one way or another, Trill was suffered to remain.

Both the Man and the Lady, and the former particularly, grew greatly attached to him after the adventure described. They placed him in the Lady's bed-room, where the sunshine came in freely and he became such a different bird from what he had seemed at first that you would hardly have known him. The last that was heard of the Man he was declaring that the Barclays—now traveling in California—should never have Trill again. He declared that he would pay any price they might ask, but Trill should henceforth be his and nobody else's.

It was found that the plate could be repaired after all, in spite of impressions to the contrary; and if it had once seemed, to the fashionable little old lady, three hundred years

of age, it must now have seemed six hundred at least.

As to Osman Pasha, his absurd aversion to infants, if any thing, increased. It was all very well until a baby came permanently to reside in the house ; but then the Lady thought there must be something the matter with him like softening of the brain. One day Osman Pasha, driven to bay, actually snapped at the baby's nose, and that important feature was only saved from destruction by the bare fact of its non-existence.

After this nothing remained but to send him away, in charge of the useful Peter, as a present to some friends on Staten Island.

THE END.



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